

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

# VUEWEEKLY

ASS  
NO. 540 / FEB 23 - MAR 1, 2006 | [HTTP://WWW.VUEWEEKLY.COM](http://www.vueweekly.com) | **FREE**

## OUR MERCURY

10 years on, schoolyard buddies have grown from petty Misdemeanors  
to nationally distributed punk phenomenon

[TYSON KABAN / 10]

EDUCATION: GET SMART  
ON FREE TUITION,  
LEARNING TO COOK  
AND THE RELEVANCE  
OF ART SCHOOL / 5, 20, 22

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## You're not boiling water; why should reserves?

KRISTINE OWRAM / [kristine@vneweekly.com](mailto:kristine@vneweekly.com)

**O**n Monday, the CBC released a report stating that two-thirds of Canada's First Nations reserves are still under boil-water advisories, despite the nearly \$2 billion spent by the federal government in addressing the problem since 2001. According to the report, some of these advisories have been in place for as long as 11 years, and 62 per cent of on-reserve water operators aren't properly certified.

Canada is a developed country with the technology and resources to fix these problems immediately, so why have so many people been forced to live with sub-par water quality for so long? According to the CBC, the biggest issue is that there is no legislation in place requiring the quality of drinking water on reserves to be monitored. On top of that, reserve leaders complain that a lack of funding and available expertise simply compound the problem.

Ultimately, this is an appalling example of what a lack of public interest in an issue can mean. It is hard to believe that problems on the scale of those in Kashechewan, where chlorine levels in the water meant people couldn't even bathe without developing skin rashes, would have been allowed to continue for so long if they were happening off-reserve.

The responsibility for this falls squarely on the shoulders of the federal government. According to CBC Online, "Indian and Northern Affairs is in a tug-of-war over funding and how best to spend money to ensure the safety of drinking water." It's time they stop arguing and start taking action. The health and safety of Canadian citizens is at stake, and this is not an issue that's going to go away on its own.

At the end of the day, this is actually a relatively simple problem to fix. If the biggest issue is a lack of legislation ensuring the consistent monitoring of water quality on reserves, let's put that legislation in place. Sure, it won't be cheap to upgrade current facilities and train qualified monitors, but money shouldn't be an issue when the basic quality of life of hundreds of thousands of our citizens is at risk. □

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## MAIL LETTERS

### BUY FLU REMEDIES WITHOUT FEAR OF LOSING PRIVACY

The ruling from the privacy commissioner you refer to in your story about pharmacists collecting personal information before dispensing certain drugs ("Your pusher wants to know more about you," Feb 16 - 22) applied only to insulin.

We are not encouraging pharmacists to collect information about Schedule 2 drugs other than insulin. WAYNE WOOD, Communications Director, Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner

### CALL MALCOLM X A QUEER, BUT GET THE FACTS RIGHT

With respect, the late Mrs King's name was Coretta Scott King, not Rosetta as noted in last week's 3 Dollar Bill column. Whether the rest of the content of this column is factual or not, when employing the words and beliefs of someone of that lady's stature, it would behoove the author to get the name right.

It leads me to wonder if he read any of her speech at all or merely employed a useful sampling of her words. How will readers know if they are employed within their intended

context? It seems to me his cause would be better served if backed by accurate writing.

CHARLENE DAPHNE O'FEE

### IN SHORT, REDDESIGN LICKS

I just wanted to write and offer a suggestion about your layout and design: it needs work.

After having picked up this week's issue, I notice that the display type within has a thinner weight than the caption text. There is also very little hierarchy throughout, making it difficult to read, let alone want to read.

I know that ads pay for this thing, but going through the paper, there seem to be so many that they are swallowing up the rest of the publication. The ads are so much more gaudy and bold than the content that they are all I see when perusing the paper.

Design can make all the difference, and right now it seems that See, albeit not much better, has you bested in legibility in design, at least.

DON EGLINSKI

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by e-mail ([letters@vneweekly.com](mailto:letters@vneweekly.com)). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.

## Pimping kinda legal

ROSS MOROZ / [ross@vneweekly.com](mailto:ross@vneweekly.com)

**T**he way the sex trade is licensed in Alberta could change drastically after a judge threw out several charges living off of the availabilities of prostitution being faced by a Calgary escort agency operator.

The judge agreed with Liaisons Escort Agency owner Doug East-

## NEWS | SEX

ough's contention that, because the City of Calgary had issued him a license to operate an escort agency, he didn't believe he was breaking the law.

In his ruling, the judge wrote that Eastough's actions, while illegal, stemmed from an "officially induced error" because the city did not make it clear enough that an "escort service" is, legally speaking, not supposed to promote prostitution.

The ruling has broad implications for the way prostitution-related offenses are tried in Alberta, and could force municipalities to re-write their escort agency bylaws. □

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# MOTORAZR

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# Wild. On.



## Spot the typo!

We're not especially good spellers, as some of you are fond of pointing out, so we can pretty much guarantee that there's a typo, grammatical error or some other boo-boo in this issue. The first person to send an e-mail to [dan@vneweekly.com](mailto:dan@vneweekly.com) detailing such a find wins his or her pick from the astoundingly horrible pile of CDs and books in our offices.

## U of A SU acquires chunk of Travel Cuts

DAN LAZIN / [dan@vneweekly.com](mailto:dan@vneweekly.com)

A long-running legal dispute between a handful of students' unions and the the national student organization that owns the Travel Cuts travel agency been settled, with the SUs—including the U of A's—gaining 24 per cent ownership in the valuable business.

The out-of-court settlement gives those shares to a new for-profit company owned by the student associations at the U of A, University of British Columbia, University of Western Ontario, Queen's University and other schools.

Until 1987, Travel Cuts was owned by the Association of Students' Councils-Canada, now dormant, of which the U of A SU and the other schools were members. When the AOSC was shut down to make room for two competing national student organizations, one of them—the Canadian Federation of Students—gained the whole travel agency.

The U of A and the other schools were never members of CFS and claimed they were shut out of the decision to change the company's ownership. ▶

## ON THE AIR

FEATURE SHOW:

## THE SHOEBOX WITH BRIAN & PETE

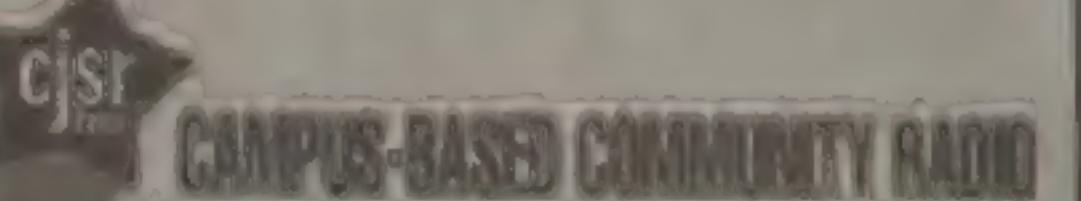
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# It'd take the luck of the Irish to eliminate tuition fees

## BUT WE MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING FROM IRELAND'S FREE-UNIVERSITY POLICY

ADAM ROZENHART / adam@vneweekly.com

Just over a year ago, Premier Ralph Klein promised an overhaul of Alberta's post-secondary education system. He said that by September 2006, the province would have a new tuition policy, making it one of the most affordable in the country.

But according to Bill Moore-Kilgannon, the executive director of Public Interest Alberta, too few voices have been included in the initial discussions.

"The consultations the province conducted were done by invite only, so certain key groups and members of the public at large weren't necessarily involved in those discussions," Moore-Kilgannon says.

In order to assess how Albertans feel about the province's post-secondary education track record, PIA held its own consultations with the public—eight in total, conducted across the province between Sep 29 and Oct 14.

The culmination of these consultations is PIA's At the Crossroads conference, which runs Feb 24 through 26 and includes presentations from local, provincial, national and even international educators and policymakers.

David Robinson, associate executive director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, says that the conference is a good opportunity to discuss how other regions and countries fund their post-secondary institutions.

"In Alberta and Ontario, we're seeing a move to a user-pay system," Robinson says. "Neo-classical economists are saying that we should increase fees that students pay and make up the difference with grants and scholarships and that would bring more students to universities."

"But that totally ignores the laws of supply and demand; the more expensive education gets, the less people can afford to attend, and therefore the demand for it decreases."

Robinson notes that in places like Scandinavia, where students aren't subject to fees, enrolment numbers are dramatically higher than in countries like Canada or the United States.

In Ireland, for another example, university fees were eliminated in 1996, and enrolment has soared.

"There are indications that, 10 years on, the abolition of fees has increased access to the financially less advantaged in [Irish] society," explains Peter MacMenamin, deputy general secretary of the Teachers' Union Ireland. He's joining *Globe and Mail* columnist Jeffrey Simpson for the conference's keynote lecture on Feb 24.

"The Irish approach to investment in education has led to the increase in participation from four to five per cent in the 1960s to over 55 per cent in higher education alone," MacMenamin says.

MacMenamin believes that the less accessible post-secondary education becomes, the more divisive society will be.

"Under no circumstance should [higher education] be only available to the elite in financial terms. This fosters social division. Higher education gen-



ILLUSTRATION BY GRAHAM JONES

LECTURE

FRI, FEB 24 (7:30 PM)  
JEFFREY SIMPSON,  
PETER MACMENAMIN  
CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL, \$10

erally correlates with higher earnings; to only admit the wealthy continues this divide," MacMenamin said.

Dave Hancock, Alberta's minister of advanced education, agrees that accessibility is an important issue. He said that the government plans give students greater access to post-secondary education by putting more money into student loans, endowments and scholarships.

"We've gone through a year of looking at post-secondary education and making the commitment to adding 60 000 student spaces over the

next 15 years," Hancock said. "I believe that no matter where you come from, every Albertan should have every opportunity to be whatever they want to be."

Hancock stopped short of saying that tuition fees would ever be eliminated in Alberta, adding that boosting literacy and convincing Albertans that attending college or university are greater priorities.

"I think we have a philosophy that students and their families have a contribution to make to the cost of education. It's a good investment and they should be a part of it," he said.

Hancock says that nations that move to eliminate tuition fees aren't necessarily providing adequate access since they aren't targeting problems like illiteracy. Still, he hopes that he can learn from the other conference presenters who live and work outside of the province and country.

"We have to be world leaders in some areas if we're going to compete in the global marketplace." ▶

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Adrienne Orsillo  
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### Procedure for Auditions

Audition candidates are selected from résumés received and will be contacted individually by telephone. All auditions for the Stratford Festival of Canada are by appointment only.

Selected applicants should prepare audition pieces consisting of:

- Two contrasting classical monologues, one of which must be in verse (maximum two minutes each).
- One contemporary monologue (maximum two minutes).

Applicants should be prepared for a callback audition.

Finalists may be required to attend a final callback in Toronto (travel provided if required).

Applications must be received by March 31, 2006.

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Interested individuals should send a résumé, photo and cover letter detailing their reasons for applying to the Conservatory to:

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Stratford Festival of Canada

P.O. Box 520, Stratford, Ontario N5A 6V2

E-mail: [auditions@stratfordfestival.ca](mailto:auditions@stratfordfestival.ca)

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The Birmingham Conservatory gratefully acknowledges the generous award of \$10,000 toward the Stratford Festival of Canada.

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If we were the sort to have glitter on our cheeks, this would be so much fun

ZENKO! **DISPATCH**  
DARREN ZENKO  
[dispatch@vnewswEEKLY.com](mailto:dispatch@vnewswEEKLY.com)

FEB 17, 2006 — WEST (WEST) EDMONTON (EDMONTON) MALL (MALL)

Malls are and have always been cartoon simulations of the traditional human spaces—markets, bazaars, public shopping streets, parks and plazas—they displace, but West Edmonton Mall takes it all the way; every zone's a little Disneyland.

"Bourbon Street" reaches feebly to attach the partytime cachet of the legendary New Orleans drinking district to its collection of characterless chain bars-and-grill; the lagoon and waterpark strive to evoke a wallet-loosening spirit of Caribbean fun 'n' sun in the throngs of snowed-in credit-cardholders; "Europa Boulevard", though it tumbles further downmarket with every passing season, still works hard at aping a classy Continental vibe.

So what pop-culture theme is the usually vacant glass-walled space in front of HMV, thronged with aspiring Canadian Idols, going for this morning? "Dystopian sci-fi allegory," I guess.

What a zoo! I mean, literally a zoo, a zoo for humans. See the Earth creatures in

their natural habitat! Hundreds of specimens in one glass enclosure, camped out on the blond hardwoodish flooring: giggly teens tramped up for their big shot, jitter-leg wired on sugar-coffee; callow gel-haired boyband dreamers (guy/girl ratio, 1:9 at least) either trying to look dangerous and sexy through their unlined faces, or sleeping; scared tubby karaoke princesses quietly warming up their tremulous white-bread R&B voices in corners; moms, dads, friends, entourages ... all penned in there, guarded by dozens of stern security drones and shepherded by clipboard ladies, surrounded by hundreds of rubbernecks on two levels, watching the animals.

They are all numbered, huge ID codes pinned to their chest for easy security verification; with all the discarded water bottles lying around, it almost looks like there's a marathon going on. And this is the start of their race, a race finish whose finish line is the the fabulous Juno Awards ... this is their chance at a shot at maybe getting a callback to try out for the finals that will decide who makes the cut for an opportunity to be made fun of on television.

Everybody is very nervous, and it's catching; WEM with its clangorous jet-takeoff noise levels is hell on the soul at the best of times, but with all this fretting and screaming and giggling and nail-bit-

ing going on, with all this hair product, cologne, fear-sweat, body spray and sex-hormone in the air, it's almost unbearable.

Money's being made, hand over fist—you can always tell when the mall's having a banner day because the Chinese in the food court is actually kind of fresh. For lunch I had a spring roll that couldn't have been more than two hours old.

It's not sitting too well, though ... this day's wearing on me, and it's even taking its toll on those for whom the mall is a natural habitat. Down in the holding pen, you can see the fatigue; tempers are getting short, perfectly made-up faces dropping into evil grimaces, black-rimmed eyes shooting daggers at those holding the colored tickets that symbolize progress: yellow for the first vetting, blue for making it through the day.

It's an ugly scene, yeah—how could it be otherwise?—but there's something oddly inspirational about it. I mean, what a great time for a young lady: eight to 10 hours of adrenaline rush/crash and peak emotional experiences, surrounded by hundreds of demographically similar hotties, punctuated by bouts of shopping, seasoned with dreams of superstardom, with a glimpse of Ben Mulroney thrown in for good measure ... all with no admission charge! —DARREN ZENKO / [daren@vnewswEEKLY.com](mailto:daren@vnewswEEKLY.com)

## But officer, it's for religious purposes!

ROSS MOROZ / [ross@vnewswEEKLY.com](mailto:ross@vnewswEEKLY.com)

**M**embers of a small Christian denomination should be allowed to import an otherwise illegal hallucinogen for ritual use, the US Supreme Court has ruled.

American members of the Brazil-based church, O Centro Espírita Beneficente União do Vegetal in Santa Fe, New Mexico, receive communion by drinking hoasca, a tea made from Amazonian plants containing

NEWS DRUGS

dimethyltryptamine, a powerful hallucinogen that is considered a controlled substance under US drug law.

The dispute began after US customs officials seized a shipment of hoasca in May of 1999. The church cited the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, a 1993 law that compels the

government to make religious exceptions to federal laws where possible.

In their unanimous decision, handed down on Tuesday, Feb 21, the court ruled in favour of upholding the RFRA, noting that the government has allowed Native Americans to use peyote (which contains the banned substance mescaline) in their spiritual practice for over 35 years, and that the same exemption should apply to members of União do Vegetal. ▀

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# And now, this week's edition of Gay People

## QUEER 3 DOLLAR BILL

RICHARD BURNETT  
threedollarbill@vneweekly.com

If you think I've got a foul mouth, honey, you ain't read nuthin' yet. In fact, if you only read daily newspapers, you're likely not au courant with the recent smorgasbord of gay gossip. So, without further ado ...

Dead Or Alive singer and former British *Celebrity Big Brother* contestant Pete Burns announced on Britain's Channel 4 that he is engaged to boyfriend Michael Simpson. "We're so happy! Michael has never seen me as a photo, a video or a song—he saw me as the person I am," says Burns, whose ever-changing face makes famed NYC tranny Amanda Lepore (who recently stripped buck naked for three hilarious private gigs with a bunch of midgets at Montreal's Just For Laughs

Museum) look positively natural.

Burns didn't answer my multiple requests for interviews before he divorced his wife in 2004 (she and I had a mutual friend, but that, alas, was to no avail). But Burns pointed out on Channel 4 for the whole world to see that his and Michael's Vivienne Westwood-designed gold skull engagement rings "symbolize that under all this flesh we are bones and souls."

And don't forget the collagen, Peter ...

After telling *The National Enquirer* last month that he had unprotected sex with American Idol has-been Clay Aiken, former US Army Green Beret John Paulus generated a huge splash with his perfectly timed arrival in NYC, talking with the *New York Post's* Page Six and being escorted to Howard Stern's morning radio show by porn impresario Michael Lucas.

It looks like Lucas will now launch Paulus's porn career. In a press statement about Paulus's claim that Aiken allegedly pressured him not to use a condom during

sex, Lucas said, "I urge the community to support Mr Paulus as he joins me in the fight against unsafe, bareback sex."

Speaking of Aiken, when stand-up comic Kathy Griffin was chastised for outing Clay in a screamingly outrageous comedy routine at the Just For Laughs Festival back in 2003, Griffin told me, "Who is he fooling? Clay Aiken has broken his own gay ceiling!"

The mainstream media, meanwhile, are going ga-ga over country icon Willie Nelson's just-released cover of "Cowboys Are Frequently Secretly Fond of Each Other," a song written in 1981 by Texas-born singer-songwriter Ned Sublette and originally recorded in the 1980s by San Francisco queer punk band Pansy Division, long-time friends of this column.

Says Nelson somewhat disingenuously, "The song's been in the closet for 20 years. The timing's right for it to come out. I'm just opening the door."

The only country door that's open is the

one kicked open by *Brokeback Mountain*, whose soundtrack features Nelson's melancholy ballad "He Was a Friend of Mine." No wonder the timing's right. Incidentally, if you're a gay porn or country music fan, listen for porn star Jeff Stryker's 2003 single "Pop You in the Pooper," which he recorded with his band The Soggy-Bottom Boys. I'd like to hear Willie cover that song when he headlines his Canadian tour with The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band this spring ...

With the crossover success of *Brokeback*, it comes as no surprise to hear that Hollywood producer Andrew Lang has acquired the film rights to one of my all-time-favourite books, *The Dreyfus Affair* by New York author Peter Lefcourt. The novel chronicles the uproar over two Major League Baseball teammates who fall in love during a pennant race and get caught kissing in the dressing room of a Neiman Marcus department store. The characters are in their late 20s, but 42-

year-old Brad Pitt is now reportedly looking for a gay film role. I can picture Brad at bat right now ...

I don't expect Hollywood will cast an openly gay actor in *The Dreyfus Affair*. Neither does Sir Ian McKellan. Accepting a lifetime achievement award at the Berlin International Film Festival last week, McKellan said, "[It remains] very, very difficult for an American actor who wants a film career to be open about his sexuality, and even more difficult for a woman. The film industry is very old-fashioned in California."

Also, hearty congratulations from TDB headquarters to Rev Brent Hawkes, pastor of Toronto's Metropolitan Community Church, who performed the double same-sex weddings in 2001 that successfully kick-started the Ontario legal fight for gay marriage in Canada. Hawkes, a friend of this column, will marry his long-time partner John Sproule on the date of their 25th anniversary, March 7. v

## A different kind of 'pro-life' movement

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vneweekly.com

California doctors' ethical opposition to capital punishment has created a *de facto* moratorium on capital punishment in the state and has raised questions as to the constitutionality of the death penalty itself.

The state was forced to postpone

## SM NEWS DEATH PENALTY

the scheduled Feb 21 execution of convicted rapist and murderer Michael Morales after officials at San Quentin State Prison could not satisfy a recent judge's ruling demanding

that a licensed medical doctor supervise the procedure.

All of the physicians contacted by the prison refused to participate, so the execution had to be called off mere hours before Morales was supposed to be put to death.

In the past, lethal injections in California were performed by specially

trained prison staff.

In light of a petition by Morales's lawyers claiming that the pain caused by improperly administered lethal injections constituted cruel and unusual punishment, the court agreed that only a medical doctor should be administering lethal injections. v

## Londoners to get the 'net everywhere

ROSS MOROZ / ross@vneweekly.com

The municipal government of London—the big London—is embarking on an ambitious project that will make high-speed wireless Internet access, or WiFi, available across the entire city within the next six months.

A private Internet company which has been contracted to install WiFi hardware on telephone poles and lamp-posts, creating a seamless net-

## SM NEWS TECHNOLOGY

work of wireless hotspots which will blanket the city, allowing Londoners to access the Internet on the street.

Any existing internet service provider will be able to rent space on the network and sell access to consumers. The network will also incorporate a secure private channel for use by emergency services.

When completed, London's network will be the largest contiguous WiFi network in the world. Currently, San Francisco's MetroFi network, which covers 90 square kilometres, holds that distinction. v

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with Peter Brown



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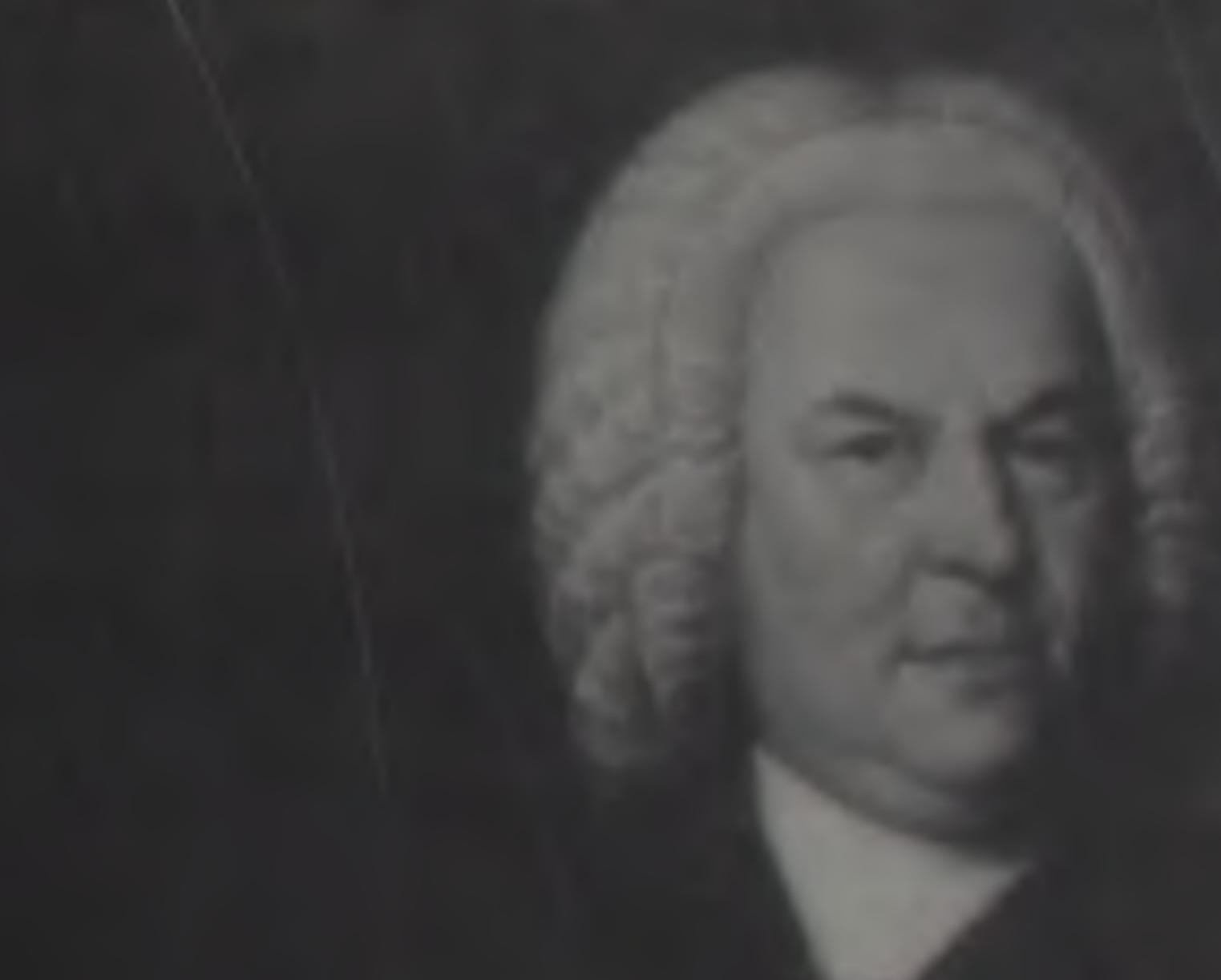
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# Growing up *From Below*

AFTER 10 YEARS TOGETHER, EDMONTON'S OUR MERCURY PREPARE TO RELEASE FIRST LP ON WINNIPEG'S SMALLMAN RECORDS



PHOTO BY RALPH ANDERSON

TYSON KABAN / [tyson@vneweekly.com](mailto:tyson@vneweekly.com)

**A**t first glance, the members of Our Mercury don't seem to be the worn-out, jaded rockers you'd imagine them to be. Clean-cut and well-dressed as they sit here drinking tea and lattés, there's little evidence that the three founding members of the band—guitarist Ben Stevenson, drummer John Watson, and bassist Dan Laxer—have been dealing with the rigours of rock 'n' roll together since before they even entered high school.

Their story begins more than a decade ago, when the three childhood friends and pal Kenneth Graham formed a punk outfit called Misdemeanor. By the time the band had reached an average age of 14, they built up enough of a reputation on the local scene to be profiled by a writer from the *Edmonton Journal*, who dubbed them "The band that's too young to be bad."

At the time, they were all pretty offended by the insinuation: sure, they were a straight-edge punk band just out of elementary school, but Watson and Laxer had purple hair and they seriously considered themselves bad-ass, anti-establishment punk-rockers. At least the article helped to placate their skeptical parents, who apparently needed some convincing about their sons' extra-curricular activities.

"Early on, the straight-edge thing eased our parents' minds because we wanted to do some pretty outlandish things for kids our age, like to go on a tour with an older band, alone, in their van, to Grand Prairie," Watson says.

"And whenever something like that came up, we would have to hold these parent meetings at my house," Stevenson adds. "All the parents would come in and I was always the one in charge, presenting our plans and getting interrogated. We never really ran into that many problems with our parents, though. They did a pretty good job of trusting us and I guess, looking back, we probably were too young to be bad."

**WHILE THEIR HEAVY INTEREST** in music did distract the guys from indulging in at least some of the excesses of rock 'n' roll until they were of a socially-appropriate age (Watson got drunk for the first time in grade nine; Stevenson waited until he was 17), they still managed to cause their parents some grief with at least a couple incidences of typical teenage-boy behaviour.

"One time we made this piss-bomb in my basement. We all took turns whizzing in this wine bottle that we were going to take and whip at the floor of a convenience store or something and just yell some shit," Watson fondly recalls. "But my mom was wondering what we were doing and she found this wine bottle. ... She just went off the wall and screamed at Ben, because Ben always had to take the blame for anything we did. But I still don't know why she got that mad. To this day, we think maybe she tasted it or something."

"But we were pretty good kids," Laxer adds. "While everyone else was drinking and doing drugs, we were just throwing apples at cars and pissing in bottles. When you think about it, that's still pretty wholesome."

The boys finally decided to move on from their teenage, angst-filled punk origins in 2000, after Graham left Misdemeanor to play in a

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (8 PM)  
**OUR MERCURY**  
WITH WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES  
NEW CITY, \$10

metal band. After overcoming the initial shock of Graham's departure, the three remaining members continued to play together, changing their name to Our Mercury in the process.

"It was pretty shocking at first because we'd been together for so long [in Misdemeanor] and we couldn't imagine the line-up being any different. We were one of those bands that if you replaced any of us, it wouldn't be the same," Watson says.

"There was no way we were going to break up the band after Ken left," Laxer continues. "It made us work harder because with only three of us, we couldn't cover up any shit when we played. There was no longer any room for error because if anyone fucked up, it would be so obvious. But it turned out to be the perfect opportunity for us to change and experiment and develop our own sound."

Right after the "new" band was formed, the guys headed out east for school, attempting, at the same time, to break into the Montreal music scene. They only lasted a year in La Belle Province, however, and arrived back in Edmonton broke but reenergized and more motivated than ever. Once home, they rented a house where they spent their time writing songs and jamming in the basement, which ultimately resulted in the release of Our Mercury's first disc, the EP *Your Medicine*, in 2003.

**NOW THE BAND IS** preparing to release their first full-length, *From Below*, which will also mark the debut of the band's newest permanent member, keyboardist/guitarist Eric Budd, who after years of being solicited by the band was finally convinced to join Our Mercury six months ago.

Produced by Nik Kozub, the album is a culmination of two and a half years of hard work—Laxer describes it as a "diverse mix of punk-rock, straight up rock 'n' roll, soul and Motown" with the some of best talent in Edmonton guesting on it.

Stevenson agrees and says it's the band's most refined record to date, showcasing a clear evolution of the band's sound. All of the original members of the band say that the new record marks a huge step forward for Our Mercury, and since they're only in their early 20s, they say there's at least another decade ahead of them and they plan on sticking it out together, both as bandmates and as friends, for as long as they can.

"If and when the time comes, it's going to be hard for us to pack it in," Stevenson says, "because I can see us at 60 years old still banging it out."

"We're going to be friends forever and I want to be playing with these guys forever," Laxer says.

And on the same page as his pals, Watson concludes, "This is one of the things that I'm most proud of that I've ever done in my life. I don't think we'll be stopping anytime soon."

Aw. ▶

# Designers strut to support Theatre Network

SARAH CHAN / [sarah@vneweekly.com](mailto:sarah@vneweekly.com)

The Roxy Theatre has been a part of Edmonton's 124 Street landscape since it opened as an independent movie house in 1938. After being purchased by the Theatre Network in 1989 it has undergone numerous upgrades and facelifts in order to provide a worthy venue for local plays by Canadian playwrights, produced for Canadians.

On Mar 1, the Roxy will be home to the Theatre Network's fashion fundraiser, **Love Styles: Spring Fever**, an event that features many of the creative shops and people of the 124 Street community.

ALL CLOTHES AND JEWELRY SUPPLIED BY GNUDA

**FASHION** WED, MAR 1 (7 PM)  
**LOVE STYLES: SPRING FEVER**  
ROXY THEATRE \$20

Having produced their first fashion show for Valentine's Day in 2005, Theatre Network is making the event a tradition with this year's sequel. They want to celebrate spring fashions in a literal sense, having choreographers work with the models to create little vignettes of all sorts of couples getting into that spring fever.

The designers featured are all local and all fabulous, specializing in their own brands. Nightshade Corsets will be providing all original hand-made corsets from their brand new store reflecting a gothic look whereas other designers such as Maggie Walt will be contributing their own trademark looks—in the latter case, beautifully elegant creations.

The diversity of local designers continues with Gnuda, Losers Reject, Red Ribbon, Verde, Local 124, and a veteran to the cause, Gravity Pope.

Local 124 is such a new store on the street that it won't even be open until just before the fashion show.

Gnuda, however, has been in business for a few months now and will be featuring golden bohemian-gypsy looks.

Red Ribbon is also contributing a number of young and hip street level looks such as pieces from Losers Reject, a line created and propelled by Linda Ritter, both a stylist at Propaganda salon and a young local fashion designer.

Pieces from the style gurus at Verde will be reflecting the class and well-dressed spirit of the '20s through '40s. Creative directors Harvey Anderson and Idaho are excited to launch their first line of polished women's wear, which is so fresh, the pieces for the show aren't all complete yet.

In addition to talented local designers, the ambiance will be further enhanced with hair and makeup by Propaganda and sets by local musicians Andrea House and Chris Smith. All these various talents are coming together to promote the importance of local theatre and the future of Theatre Network.

As the Theatre Network's general manager David Cheoros, exclaims, "I think that people like our local musicians and visual artists and playwrights who are able to tell our own stories. We don't have a lot of local artists, and we don't nurture those local artists, we're left with nothing but other people's lives to tell."

Love Styles also promises to be a visual feast of a theatrical fashion show, with the various elements of design, makeup, hair and theatre all combined for a truly comprehensive look at style as art, and theatre as well dressed as ever. □

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Photo: Lorne Cardinal by Barry Ross • Design by Chris Peters

The kind of Luck that finds  
your husband dead beside you

BOOKS | PRINT CULTURE  
CHRISTOPHER WIEBE  
printculture@vneweekly.com

While consumer marketers doggedly fill our world with products promising joy and fulfillment, so much of what we experience is shaped by loss and regret, things left unfinished.

I think it was an Old Testament prophet who wrote, "All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades." Enter Joan Barfoot's witty and contemplative novel *Luck* (Knopf Canada)—a finalist for the 2005 Giller Prize—which begins with a devastating loss. Artist Nora Lawrence wakes to find her 46-year-old husband Phillip—a "bulky, brawny, boisterous" high-end furniture-maker—dead beside her. Over the next three days, we watch as Nora and her housekeeper, Sophie, and unstable live-in model Beth, fumble in the wreckage left by Phillip's absence, pondering their knotted pasts.

Nora—for whom "half the conversation of her life is suddenly gone"—grieves over the physical reminders of Phillip, obsessively sketching heaps of his shirts and ties.

Sophie, who'd been having an affair with the man for three months, is torn by her secret and her previous work in a death-filled refugee camp.

Max, Nora's elderly art dealer, provides a sort of emotional centre of gravity: "It would be foolish to tell you that you will recover, because in very many ways there is no recovery, only change."

For a novel about post-mortem suspension, *Luck* gets tremendous locomotion from stories within stories and anxious, often very funny, interior monologues. British reviewers refer to *Luck's* "sardonic satire" and "black comedy" but, to my mind, much of this leans on the playful narrator. "What do other new widows do?" the narrator coyly asks. "They weep, they flail, they collapse. Or

some take cruises, or lovers."

In fact, the novel is often very tender and moving. Rather than fashion the three women's journey as an irony-dusted romp, Barfoot uses laughter to gently reveal the self-deception that limits each character's hard-won enlightenment.

Joan Barfoot will be reading at the Stanley Milner Library on Sunday, February 26, at 2 pm.

**ON A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT** tack, Calgary poet Richard Harrison's taut and unflinching new collection, *Worthy of His Fall* (Wolsak and Wynn), explores mortality and loss through the lens of fatherhood and male mythologies.

Harrison has circled these themes in his four previous collections, like *Recovering the Naked Man* (1991), where he grappled with feminist readings of masculinity: "to be a man writing / ... to discover a body distanced / not by oppression but by privilege."

*Worthy* extends this dialogue between public and private, directing a strong current of outrage towards male violence and the politics that feeds off it. Poems move from Donald Rumsfeld's "high powered squint" to the pornographic nature of Iraq war footage to the six feet of excrement in a slave castle's holding cell.

But this violence is also very ordinary, even domestic. "In the privacy of his home, a man throws / a punch at his bedroom door ... He knows he has always cradled / this blinding rage. He's felt it flood out of the father he loves." And the poet finds shades of budding aggression as his young son plucks aspen leaves.

A unique and rich dimension of Harrison's writing has always been this profound sense of generational dialogue: "You will look for me, too," father says to son, "in the face growing old I told you once was like mine / But do not find me."

The voice in Harrison's poems demonstrate a ruthless, transparency of thought we hide from even those we love. In this nakedness and vulnerability, Harrison finds a terrible, necessary beauty. □

# He's a real Nowhere man

LETTING THE WIND GUIDE HIM, ROBERT BOYD'S UNLIKELY HERO IS A GONER

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vneweekly.com

Randy Watson, the protagonist in Robert Boyd's first novel, *On the Road to Nowhere*, isn't the sharpest knife in the drawer. And he isn't especially likeable, either

However, there is something in his manner, something in the stripped-down prose Boyd uses to tell Randy's story, that makes Randy a compelling character. He's that scrawny teenager you see on the bus, scowling at the world. Or that shaggy station attendant who can't look at you straight in the eye. While he doesn't seem especially scary, there is something just a touch unnerving about him that makes you want to stare and wonder.

And as you follow the 16-year-old from his unhappy home in north interior BC down the titular road across the prairies and back into Vancouver, it's always hard to tell whether Randy is going to crash and burn or simply run off, tattered and as a question of him racing off in a Hem

WHILE SOME OF the tales that inform *On the Road to Nowhere* were plucked from Boyd's own experiences, it's when he reaches past his tale and delves into the darker side of Randy that the novel really begins to sing.

When Randy ends up in the now closed Burnaby Oakalla Prison Farm it's not exactly surprising. What is, though, is how Boyd's use of language steps up a notch to illustrate the terror of a piece of paper that was regularly at three times its capacity.

"That prison was in the news quite frequently," Boyd explains. "It was constantly being plagued by over crowding and there was a lot of nots

READING

TUE, FEB 28

ROBERT BOYD

READING FROM *ON THE ROAD TO NOWHERE*  
STANLEY A. MILNER LIBRARY (NOON)  
AUDREY'S BOOKS (7:30 PM)

there, and fairly easy to escape from. "It seemed like every time that I turned the news on," he continues, "something was happening there. They finally decided to close the place, which was long overdue."

While Boyd's take on prison life is his book at its most lyrical, it's not until Randy ends up there that the stories before this turn of events begin to truly resonate. It simply doesn't feel far-fetched for any young man like him to end up in the same position. And what starts out as a rambling trip-tych turns into a cautionary tale.

He's not the powerful hero in *On the Road to Nowhere*—just a bit of average Joe. Randy's journey is one that many young immigrant workers can relate to; he's someone body whom we've all met in our own travels.

The BC author, who'll be in Edmonton for a couple of readings

ON THE ROAD TO

on Feb 28, spent a number of years wandering across Canada, first and only living in Alberta for over a decade. "I discovered what many Edmontonians already know

The 11 years that I lived in Calgary, I got kind of caught up in all that Calgary-Edmonton rivalry," Boyd says. "Then I moved to Edmonton and I actually kind of liked it better." □

## Kozub's in *The Brown Family* way

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vneweekly.com

In local writer Mark Kozub's third novel, *The Brown Family*, he continues to look very much like his people.

One of Edmonton's Ravine Poets, Kozub tells the story of a quirky Edmonton family using telling minutiae. And with it, he blurs the line between ordinary

READING

THU, MAR 2 (7:30 PM)

MARK KOZUB

READING FROM *THE BROWN FAMILY*  
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VUEWEEKLY

DISH

# With the sandwich, in the canteen, it was Col Mustard

CHRISTIE SCHULTZ / christie@vneweekly.com

Apparently, spring-like weather in February makes everyone want to go out for lunch. Who knew? My partner and I had to wait a few minutes at busy Col Mustard's for a table, but it gave us a chance to look around.

For those of you familiar with the old sandwich joint, which closed in early October to make way for its January relocation and transformation, table service is a new part of the sandwich experience.

More surprising are the spacious and funky new digs. Every wall is a different, bright colour, like the ones you'd have in your home if you were braver. The warm sunlight coming through lots of windows made the spring sunshine feel almost summery.

We ordered coffees (\$1.95) to get our midday caffeine kick. The chalkboard offered soups, including potato leek, minestrone, and a tomato basil

and cheese (\$1.95). My partner opted for a tabbouleh salad (\$4.75) to start.

If you go to the Colonel expecting Subway, you're bound to be confused and probably upset at the lack of combo deals. The fare is not fast food.

However, with somewhere around 50 sandwiches to choose from, you can expect your sandwich dreams to come true.

My partner fiercely craved a Montreal smoked meat sandwich and found it easily on the list, served on



**SANDWICH**  
OPEN MON - SAT UNTIL 5 PM  
COL MUSTARD'S  
SANDWICH CANTEEN  
10802 - 124 STREET

rye with mustard (\$6.95).

I was hoping for something fresh, with a new spin on favourite ingredients: I picked the pressed turkey sandwich with pesto, roasted peppers, and provolone (\$8.95).

**WHEN IT ARRIVED**, my tomato soup was creamy, mild and featured a few whole basil leaves. It was good, but I'd probably try one of the other soups next time. My partner's tabbouleh salad, a mix of parsley, bulgar wheat, tomato and

lemon, was surprisingly nutty in flavour. I'd sample this one again.

The smoked meat, moist, flavourful and piled high on rye, satisfied my partner's craving. The spicy mustard she chose—they also have regular and Dijon—was lively but did not overwhelm. Montreal may have made this sandwich famous, but it's right at home at Col Mustard's.

My pressed sandwich looked so good upon its arrival that I forgot to take the review's photo. Crispy, buttered sourdough held my sandwich together. While turkey and pesto are often close companions, the roasted red peppers made me giddy. In my mind, I saluted the Colonel for this one. The included pickle spears were good, mild and kosher—just the way a sandwich pickle should be.

Our coffees kept flowing while we ordered tarts for dessert. We had overheard a tart recommendation but not a flavour, so I ordered the lemon (\$1.95) and my partner ordered the custard (\$1.65). My lemon tart was tangy and not oversweet, well matched with its shortbread shell. The custard tart, though, was perfection. Have one. Now.

With coffee, appetizers, sandwiches and tarts, the bill came to \$32 before tax and tip. For a sandwich, it's not cheap. For a full-service, three-course lunchtime experience in a casual, trendy new place, the price is a steal.

Col Mustard's still offers a takeout counter for those in a rush. Both the sign on the door and the serving staff promised that evening service was coming soon. When that happens, a tapas-style menu will be available from 5 pm onwards.

I'm tempted to work my way through the whole menu. If I start now, I could be through by summer. I might, however, shave a day off my experience by skipping the sardines. □

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# As Seinfeld's dad says, you can make a meal of the appetizers (on Whyte)

SARAH CHAN / [sarah@vneweekly.com](mailto:sarah@vneweekly.com)

Whyte Avenue is Edmonton's SoHo. Our trendiest neighbourhood teems with independent shops and eateries, interspersed with a few tolerable chains.

It's a place to party, shop, see and be seen; most of all (at least before 9 pm), it's a street where people eat. In the proximity of just two blocks, a couple can savour four completely unique dining experiences.

One cold Friday eve, the bundled bustled along the ave in search of suitable supping. My fiancé and I were on a whirlwind tour to investigate appetizers and bevvies. Our only possible first choice was to step out of the cold and into Whyte's bustling Greek cornerstone, **Yianni's Taverna**.

A waitress seated us almost immediately at a small table near the open kitchen. After a long week, my first order of business was getting a drink. The retsina (\$6) was a hearty white wine with notes of grapefruit and rosemary, the dry initial punch leaving lingering citrus aromas on the back of the tongue.

Retsina complimented our prawns Youvetsti (\$11.95) perfectly. The succulent tiger prawns were baked in a tomato ouzo sauce, topped generously with toasted feta, and arrived in a tiny dish resembling a mini-wok. That sauce was a show-stopper, marrying the taste of shellfish with sweet ouzo.

We followed the prawns with keftedes (\$9.50) and tarama dip (\$4.95). The rich, creamy coral-tinted mousse dip resembled a giant marshmallow made of smoked carp roe, lemon and oil. It made a strange combination with crunchy-crusted keftedes. The traditionally prepared meatballs were doused liberally from the lemon wedge, then dipped in tzatziki.

**BUOYED BY THE ENERGY** at Yianni's, we walked a few doors down to the chic **Sapphire Lounge**.

The move from homey Greek getaway to icy, sleek minimalism was a shock. The long, narrow-yet-cavernous space was lined on one wall with bar-height stools at rows of tiny tables perched in front of a stunning water wall. Cocktails are Sapphire's claim to fame, but their tapas menu has substance.

I went lighter this time, with a Lights Out martini (\$7.71) of Soho (lychee liqueur), Chamboard, Stoli vodka, cranberry and pineapple juices. My fiancé opted for Hpnotiq, gin and Blue Curacao in the Sapphire Original (\$7.71).

Two long-stemmed martini glasses arrived, one pink and one blue. Mine was a delicious fruity concoction, reminiscent of a liquor-infused smoothie, with its deep raspberry hues and frothy top. The Sapphire Original was much stiffer but the gin was artfully proportioned against the sweet blue liqueurs.

Our tapas arrived on simple white, square plates. We chose the smoked

## LOTS AND LOTS OF APPETIZERS

SUN - THU UNTIL 10 PM, FRI - SAT UNTIL 11 PM  
**YIANNI'S TAVERNA**  
10444 - 82 AVENUE / 439 6768

MON - WED UNTIL 1 AM, THU - SAT UNTIL 2 AM  
**SAPPHIRE LOUNGE**  
10416 - 82 AVENUE / 437 0231

MON - THU UNTIL 10 PM, FRI - SAT UNTIL 11 PM,  
SUN UNTIL 5 PM  
**FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO**  
10354 - 82 AVENUE / 439 9604

SUN - THU UNTIL 11 PM, FRI - SAT UNTIL MIDNIGHT  
**DEATH BY CHOCOLATE**  
8123 - 104 STREET / 435 6669

steak quesadilla (\$6) and jerk chicken skewers (\$6) and were happy for the heat. The duo of dainty jerk skewers packed a zesty citrus punch, but we were left wanting more.

Our bulgogi-like quesadilla was melted with cheese, onions and mushrooms, then pressed in a sundried tomato flatbread. An aioli dip provided just the cooling effect required for the chili-hot quesadilla; I fanned my mouth, also wanting more. The heat left me thirsty but we pressed on to our next destination.

**OUR NEXT CULTURAL SHIFT** was into a classy old-world bistro on the next block. Stepping into **Flavours Modern Bistro** across from the Princess Theatre was like being transported to another time, another place. A wall of exposed brick, a cozy fireplace near the front, a beautiful dark-stained bar and waiters in long black aprons fuelled the fantasy.

Reaching capacity, we could only go light, though the menu tempted me. The daily specials promised roasted corn and wild boar bacon chowder (\$5), which I paired with a Parisian Orangina (\$2.75).

My fiancé chose the salad Nicoise (\$12), which came topped with a mid-rare ahi tuna steak. A perfect balsamic vinaigrette was drizzled across organic greens, a halved hard-boiled egg and olives aplenty.

He wasn't jealous of my deep, hearty blend of whole corn in chowder. Bacon, carrots and the corn lent a wonderful taste and intriguing texture. We both devoured the salad, but I strategically saved much of my soup for lunch the next day.

**FINALLY, OUR DESIRE** for the sweet led us across the street to **Death by Chocolate**. The newly-converted coffee shop looked much the same as it used to, with some extra signage, two large coolers and a plasma TV.

Flipping through the leathery binder of dessert selections, I resented having to pick just one. We needed something cool and refreshing, however, so we went with the Caribbean Delight (\$7.95) with plain coffee (\$1.95) for him and a white chocolate mocha (\$2.75) for me.

The latter was highly recommended by the menu and, though rich and frothy, I found a lump of powder at the bottom. The plain ol' cup of joe was more suited to our breezy dessert.

A delicious, Bernard Callebaut dark chocolate palm tree was planted in two scoops of berry and French vanilla ice cream. After devouring palm tree and ice cream, we dipped pieces of fresh kiwi, strawberry, pineapple, cantaloupe and mandarin oranges into the little cup of melted chocolate for a mini-fondue.

From Mykonos to a metropolitan lounge, to a Viennese coffee shop and a sweet pseudo-Caribbean treat, I didn't leave a two-block area.

After \$92 plus tax and tip, we were stuffed. I carried lunch for tomorrow and we were ready to hit the clubs or the shows. □

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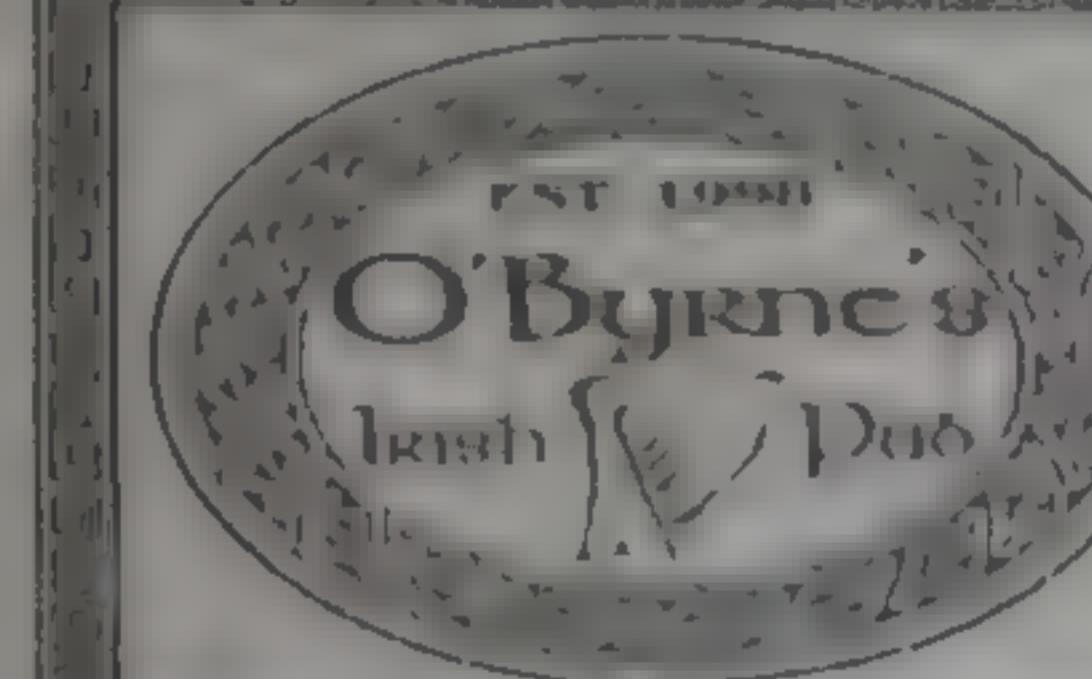
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# (The other) Winter Games at the starting blocks

JEREMY DERKSEN / jeremy@vneweekly.com

The kevlar fences and run marking for the Alberta Winter Games' moguls and aerials competitions, running Feb 23 to 26, are set and ready to go at Marmot Basin.

The games feature athletes ages 12 to 17 competing in outdoor winter sports as well as indoor sporting events.

Marmot Basin hosts the alpine racing—slalom, giant slalom and dual GS—as well as the freestyle events. More events will be happening back in Jasper, where athletes

## SNOW | COMPETITION

will compete in figure skating and speed skating, as well as fencing and squash.

Other towns in the area are also hosting events. Men's hockey is in Edson, women's in Hinton, and biathlon and cross-country at locations around Yellowhead County.

If you're in the area, go and check out some of our up and coming athletes. □

# Five Olympic skiers, four sets of skis

## SKING | FALL LINES

HART GOLBECK

falllines@vneweekly.com

### GOLDEN GIRL IS COMING HOME EARLY

Jennifer Heil, the freestyle skier who grabbed Canada's first gold medal in Torino, is coming home early. At first she had planned to stick around, cheer on Canada and attend the closing ceremonies, but one week of goodwill has tired her out.

She probably had a good chance of being the flag bearer at the closing ceremonies—at least until Cindy Klassen took three medals in skating.

Spruce Grove, get ready to party, because Heil should be hitting town even as this story hits the newsstands.

### MAN OF MYSTERY WINS MOGULS GOLD

Last weekend, Dale Begg-Smith, once a Canadian but now an Australian, won the Olympic mogul competition. All we know is that he's a millionaire, drives a Lamborghini and skis really well.

Apparently Begg-Smith's money comes from an internet ad-tracking business that he doesn't want to name or discuss, but it's funded his last six years of training.

He claims he hasn't had a falling out with Canada's Olympic committee, but when you're rich and you know how to ski, you probably aren't too crazy about following the regulations of an established winter sporting nation.

Competition to make the Australian team probably wasn't too difficult.

### SKIER DOESN'T LIKE AUTHORITY

After a disappointing finish in the Super-G race, French skier Pierre-Emmanuel Dalcin stopped and gave the finger to the cameras.

Caught on international TV and in front of thousands, he was fined the maximum penalty of US\$3,800 for making an

obscene gesture.

Dalcin was upset because in the morning, he was leading the pack after 17 racers had completed, but race officials stopped the race because of bad weather.

By late afternoon the weather improved and all racers competed again. Dalcin was unable to repeat his morning performance and as a result sent a message to the judges.

### PAINFUL SUPER-G FOR CANADA'S GUAY

One of our premier alpine skiers really had a tough day on the slopes. First-time Olympian Erik Guay had never skied the course at Sestriere—training was cancelled because of heavy snow, so he had to go in blind.

Team doctors had to shoot his knee up with painkillers in the morning, then repeat the process after the race was delayed for several hours.

Like a crazy Canuck, Guay screamed down the hill, only to be knocked off the podium by one-tenth of a second.

Canada's alpine spokesperson commented that it was an unbelievable effort but "unfortunately it's all about medals." That may be true as far as the standings go, but we're still proud of him.

### NEW SPORT: SKI JUMPING SANS SKIS

Viewers watching Olympic coverage over the weekend witnessed a ski jumper taking an exceptionally strange air.

As Canadian aerialist Jeff Bean launched off the ramp during training, his skis left his feet. The ski-less Bean continued to perform a version of the stunt he was practicing, twisting and somersaulting in the air before hitting the ground boots- and butt-first.

Cameras were setting up their angles and happened to film it. The jump won't impact the standings, and Bean walked away uninjured but a little sore. He is in the running, however, for the Understatement of the Games Award, telling *Ski Press*, "it's not normal to see a jumper in the air without his skis." □

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# The EasyRider Condition Report

## LOCAL

Rabbit Hill - 2 cm new snow, 60 cm base, terrain park open and all runs 100% open  
Snow Valley - 5 cm new snow, 60 cm base, x country and all runs 100% open

## ALBERTA

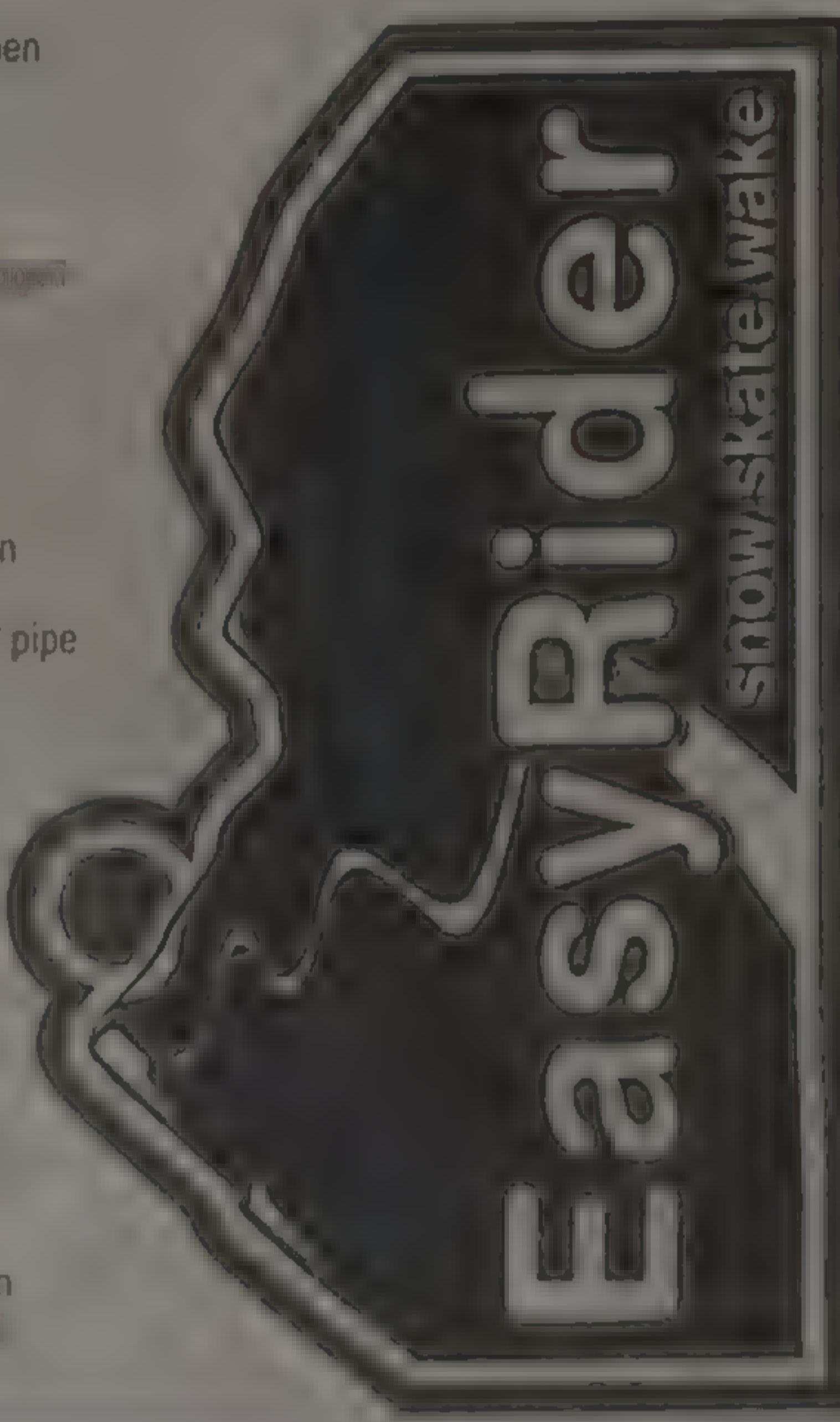
Castle Mtn - 2 cm new snow, 70 - 204 cm base, 61/62 runs open  
Can. Olympic Park - 2 cm new snow, 100 cm base, all runs 100% open  
Fortress - no new snow, 78 - 118 cm base, backside double chair now open  
Lake Louise - 10 cm new snow, 143 - 187 cm base, all lifts and 112/113 runs open  
Marmot Basin - 1 cm new snow, 78 cm base, all main lifts and 83/84 runs open  
Mt. Norquay - 4 cm new snow, 89 cm base, all lifts and 27/28 runs open  
Nakiska - 4 cm new snow, 32-75 cm base, 5/6 lifts and terrain and rail parks open  
Pass Powderkeg - 2 cm new snow, 82 cm base, all lifts, 11/14 runs w/ terrain park open  
Sunshine - 17 cm new snow, 170 cm base all lifts and 103/107 runs open  
Tawatinaw - 2 cm new snow, all lifts and runs open

## B.C.

Apex - 3 cm new snow  
Big White - 3 cm new snow, 261 cm base, all lifts and 117/119 runs open  
Fairmont - no new snow, all runs open  
Fernie - 6 cm new snow, 307 cm base, all lifts and runs open  
Kicking Horse - 7 cm new base, 152 cm base, 105/106 runs open  
Kimberley - trace new snow, 117 cm base, 6/7 lifts and all runs open  
Panorama - 1 cm new snow, 75-110 cm, all lifts, trails, and bowls open, snowboard park and 1/2 pipe now open  
Powder King - no new snow, 248 cm base  
Powder Springs - 10 cm new snow, 100 cm base  
Red Mtn - no new snow, 247 cm base, all lifts and runs open  
Silver Star - new snow 1/2 cm, 205 cm base, all lifts and most runs open  
Sun Peaks - no new snow, 160 cm base, all lifts and runs open  
Whistler/Blackcomb - no new snow, 234 cm base, 22/23 lifts open, 1/2 pipe at Whistler closed  
Whitewater - 17 cm new snow, 294 cm base, 3 lifts open

## USA

Big Mtn - 13 cm new snow, 120-298 cm base, 8 lifts and 98 runs now open  
Big Sky - 2.5 cm new snow, 215 cm base, all lifts and runs open  
Crystal Mtn - no new snow, 63 cm base, 7 lifts and all runs open  
49 Degrees - no new snow, 380 cm base at top, all runs open  
Great Divide Ski Area - 12.5 cm new snow, 62.5-137 cm base, 80 runs open  
Lookout Pass - 5 cm new snow, 370 cm base, all runs open  
Schweitzer Mtn - no new snow, 205 cm base, 6/8 lifts and all runs open



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## At Panorama, it's ski-o-rama

COLIN CATHREA / [colin@vneweekly.com](mailto:colin@vneweekly.com)

**T**he world's most perfect alarm clock—the low rumbling of Snow Cats grooming the base area—awakens me.

I roll over and gaze at her. Big and friendly, she looks beautiful in the morning light. She's plumper than the last time I saw her. As the light brightens her features, she looks more and more inviting. No, this isn't porn: this is Panorama.

Once again, the slightly longer drive all the way up to Panorama Mountain Village was well worth it. I was bloody glad to get off the QE2 on a crazy Friday and take the shortcut towards Banff. With my daughter and her boyfriend happily tuned into their iPods, we made our way into BC.

Unfolding the mountain map, I was taken aback by the size of the village. After passing several hotels and condos, we finally found our rooms. Once again we were pleasantly surprised, as the room was fully equipped. With a grocery store just below us, we could even cut costs if we felt so

I woke up Saturday morning and strolled out onto the deck. Holy shit! It was 21 degrees below and I was in my skivvies. Waking up the kids, I gave them the weather report: sunny, no wind. They rolled over and groaned, but quickly joined me for breakfast without prodding.

We popped into the rental shop to grab a snowboard for my daughter, where we were handled quickly, efficiently, and courteously.

I decided to head out after a good layering of protection, including a face-warmer. In the three-person line-up at the Mile 1 Quad, I noticed how

**AREA** **PANORAMA**

people don't talk when it's cold—we just bury our faces deep in our jackets and stare.

A very pleasant surprise was soon to greet us, though. As we ascended the mountain, the temperature followed us. By the top of the first quad it was 10 degrees below, and the inversion continued on our way up the Champagne Express.

Finally, after cresting the Summit Quad at the very top, it was 5C, and the view was more than spectacular: it stopped almost every one of us.

**WITH THE MORNING LIGHT** cascading over the mountains, I spotted Mount Assiniboine off in the distance. It seems strange that Panorama is a two-hour drive from Banff, yet you can still easily see the alpine highlands that hold Sunshine Village from this high up.

Finally, it was time for some of the wide-open cruisers that keep me coming back to Panorama. After a difficult time getting down Outer Limits, I traversed over to Picture Perfect and Skyline. As I sped down the empty slopes the temperature continued to drop and by the time I was halfway down Show Off I had to stop and apply some warm hands to my cheeks, which were frozen solid. Turns out that -20C with a windchill leads to frostbite. On my next run down Rollercoaster I started doing those "lean-way-over" carvers, using much more hip and

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



CONTINUE READING ON YOUR PAGE

knee angulation to cut through the cold, hardened corduroy.

ON MY WAY UP to the summit again, the thumping of the first helicopters of the day filled the valley. I slowed down a bit up top in the warm inversion to soak in some rays and take advantage of the well-written area information that's dispersed throughout the resort.

At the top of every lift, a full account of run conditions details snow and grooming, even breaking the run down into segments, so it's not unusual to read: "A little rough on the edges halfway down, but the bottom half is excellent."

The description of the Extreme Dream Zone described varied conditions on each path down. After some consideration, I picked Orca, a double black diamond, because it was rated "excellent" with "soft powder still found just into the trees." It was tough sledding, but well worth the plunge.

I kept migrating back to the summit

and, after another cappuccino, I decided to go look for the kids, who were snowboarding somewhere below. With no sign of them in the room or in the terrain park, I headed back up the Mile 1 and went looking for an old favourite called Schober's Dream, a ridiculously long run.

I was off alone and kept skiing to the left, and before long I looked up and I realized I didn't know where I was. There's something to be said about a ski area where you can get lost within area boundaries. I figured out I was over in the Sun Bowl and skiing through what appeared to be a Christmas tree lot. This area must have been logged years ago and replanted. It's a great little personal playground.

Give this resort a try. It's good all season long as a result of tremendous snowmaking. They make big stockpiles and move it around to ensure coverage right into the spring.

This is a ski-to-your-door operation, and accommodations run the gamut from three- to five-star digs. Just call the resort to find out about the ski-and-stay packages they offer. □

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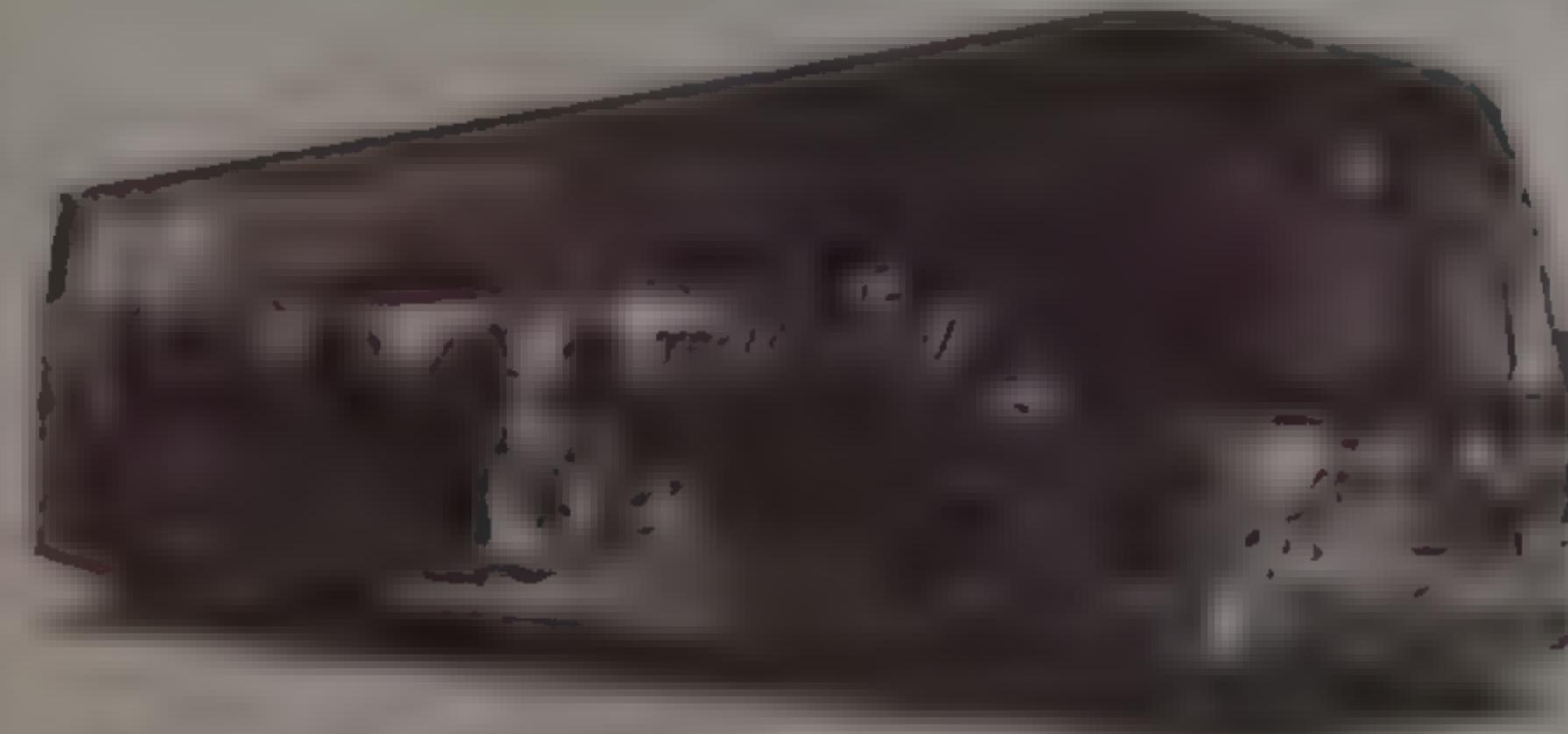
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# You can teach art, but can art teach you?

CHAD HUGULAK / chad@vneweekly.com

**A**sk any post-secondary student in Alberta if she thinks tuition is expensive and she will laugh in your face, then ask for a bit of spare change.

Education in artistic fields—design, music, or writing, for example—is an especially uncertain investment: art is notorious for its gleaming brass ring of fame and fortune that leaves thousands upon thousands at the wayside, penniless and in despair.

So why throw money at a degree that does not guarantee a job while those you idolize brag about their accomplishments with their lack of formal training? Well, sometimes there are still a few things to learn.

Greg Freer, 23, an industrial designer who recently became the first Canadian to win Germany's prestigious Red Dot design award, is of two minds about the benefits his University of Alberta Bachelor of Arts diploma has given him.

"The education I received was beneficial in some ways," says Freer. "It gave me a sense of direction as to how to focus my skills. The assignments I was given really gave me a goal to focus on, wherein if I'd had to wing it on my own I wouldn't have gotten any feedback on what I needed to work on."

But the tuition for the four-year program wasn't what Freer calls a "smart investment." He recalls, "I was fortunate enough to have a scholarship to pay for my schooling. Had it not been there, I probably would have been a lot more upset with my degree."

**LOCAL FOLK MUSICIAN** Krista Hartman, who released her debut CD last year, dodged the education system for as long as she could.

"Music theory is something I've always loathed," recalls Hartman. "For me, it has always taken the glory out of being a songwriter. When I

was a kid, I used to ditch my piano teacher midway through her lessons, I'd run up the local toboggan hill and wait for my mom to pick me up. They'd be screaming at me to come down, and I'd yell: 'Not until she takes the white-out off of the music notes.'"

After teaching ESL around the

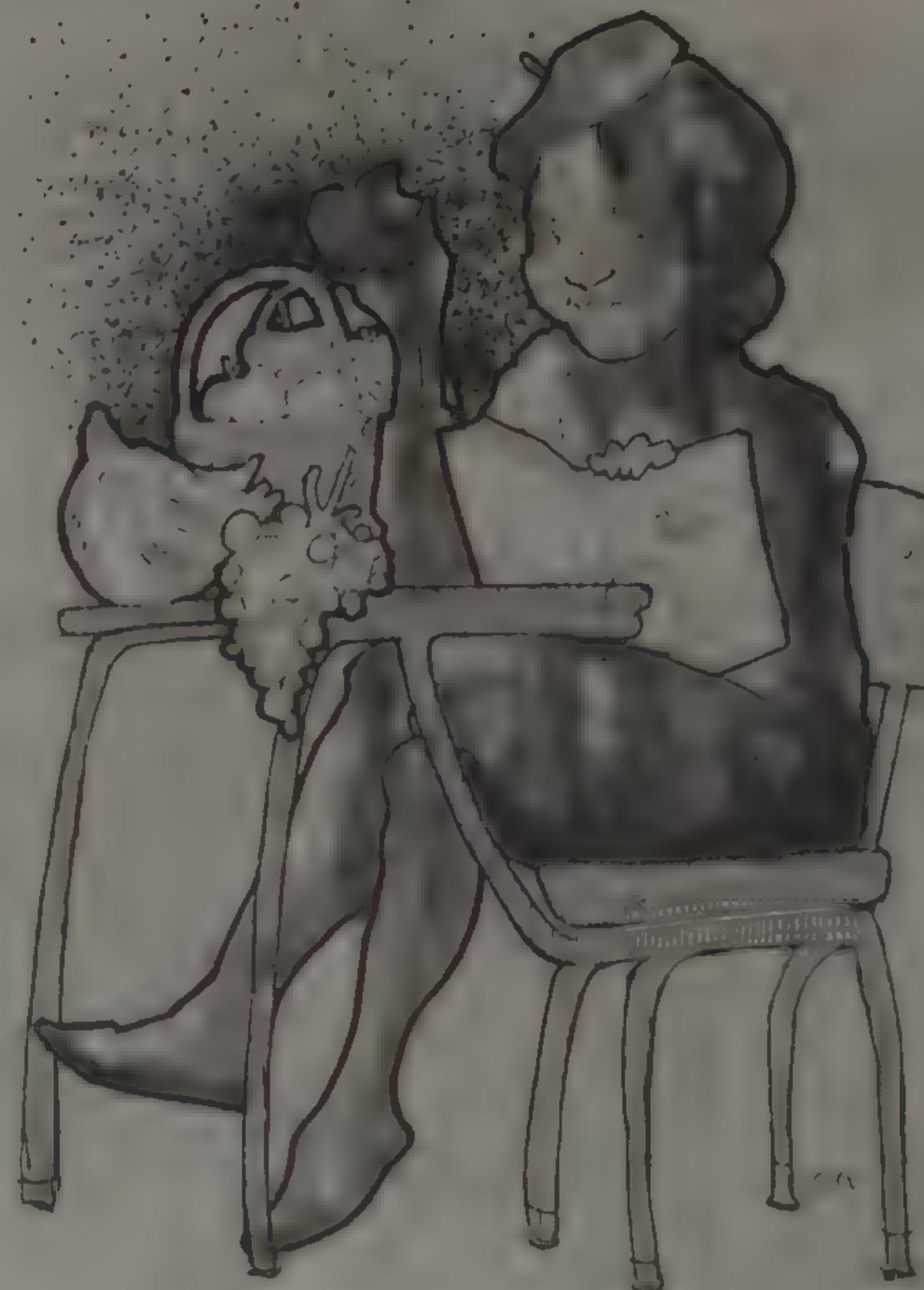


ILLUSTRATION BY PARASHA RACHINSKY

NEWS

## EDUCATION

world, Hartman changed her tune, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in English, in addition to continuing her musical pursuit in her free time.

"Formal education is really important in this day and age," Hartman says now. "In my opinion, one goes to school to find out how little they actually know. Many musicians think going to school is the easy way out—selling out. I've come to realize they are wrong."

"I'm also learning a lot more than I would have working for minimum wage at some trucker's breakfast diner, and I think I've become more balanced and realistic with regard to my ambitions as a songwriter."

With music, the allure of DIY is still strong; seldom does music education get mentioned in the history of music legends, while the band of the moment will frequently tell the press how only their self-motivation got them to where they are today.

Cameron Ambrose is one of those do-it-yourselfers. His band, Exit303, put out an album that Ambrose decided to self-produce despite the chance to record with a big-name producer.

Ambrose makes it clear that his education came solely in the form of music/technical magazines and a great deal of experience. He skipped formal training as a producer because of the cost and because, he says, there's a "lack of credible recording schools in the region."

"It made for a longer road as I had to discover techniques for myself instead of being shown proper practices from the beginning," Ambrose said. "That being said, it made the journey very rewarding and interesting. I've also been able to use the money saved in education costs to improve the quality of my studio."

Now the owner of his own music studio, Ambrose credits hard-work and self-discovery that allows him not to chase work—it now finds him.

**CHERYL KAYE IS** a local published author of three novels and numerous other projects who credits her accomplishments to her relatively modest education.

"Most of my education, when it comes to writing, has been gleaned from high-school language arts programs and a few writing courses," says Kaye, who took a writing correspondence course through International Correspondence Schools after her husband was posted to the small town of Chatham, NB, where she found few other opportunities.

With a sense of confidence from obtaining her ICS certificate, Kaye found advancement in her field along with many open prospects.

"In many ways, I am self-taught," says Kaye. "I have studied my industry by analyzing bestsellers to see what makes them work. I have read articles on writing, invested in numerous reference books, and contacted people who are 'doing it.' There is no real internship for fiction writers. You learn by experience, by making mistakes and finding ways to fix them." ▶

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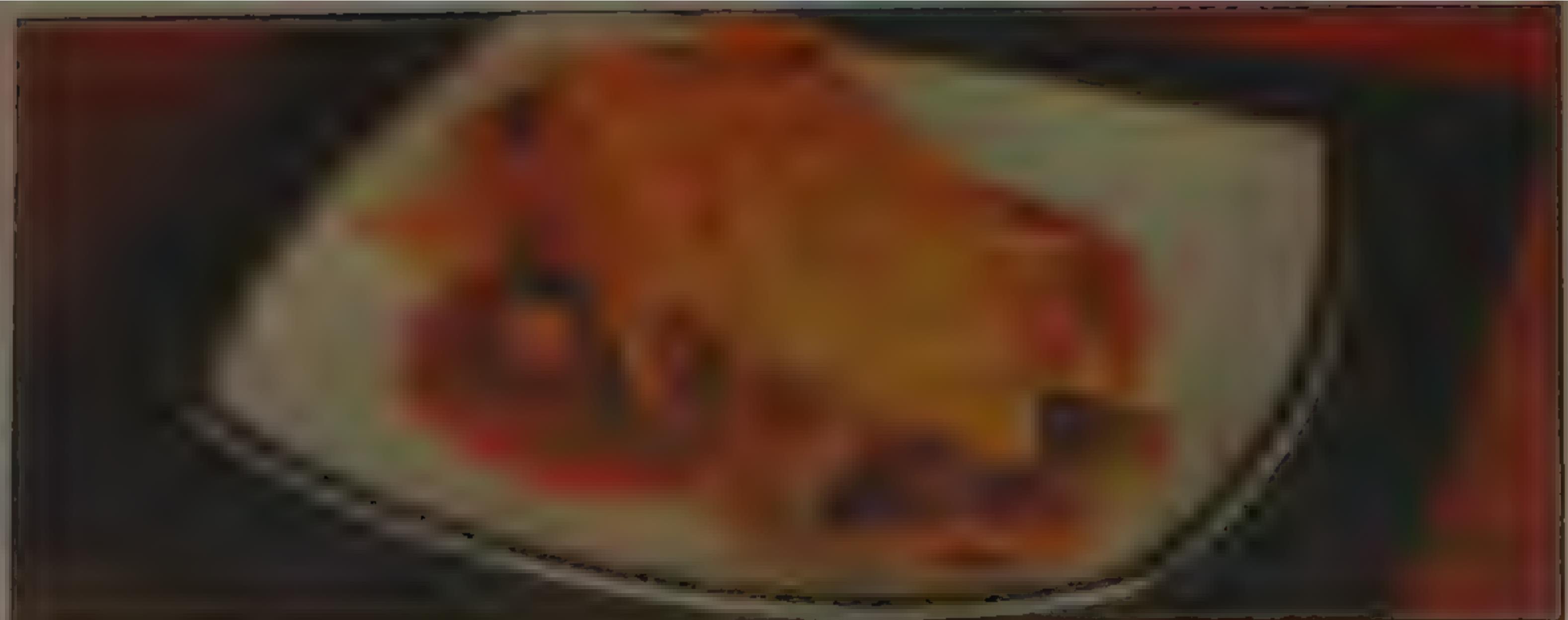


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## Cook up a career in the culinary arts

CHRISTOPHER THRALL/ christopher@vneweekly.com

**B**raised duck in a white wine and shallot reduction, served with sautéed asparagus and endive salad in a raspberry vinaigrette.

Culinary terms flow off a salivating tongue, and most of them are as shrouded in mystery as any alchemist's formula or mathematical proof. What is braising? How do you reduce white wine? What the hell is a shallot, and who decided that asparagus should be served with every meal?

With a little time and some trial and error, the complexities of kitchencraft can be taught. NAIT's School of Hospitality has been teaching the gustatory arts for nearly 40 years.

Through its various certificate, diploma and apprenticeship programs, the School produces nearly 500 graduates per year.

Students go on to chef at local favourites or restaurants around the world. Others found careers as food stylists, in culinary publishing or research and development for new foods or recipes.

The School of Hospitality includes programs for baking or retail meat-cutting, but for most, their culinary education begins with the one-year certification. This comprehensive program addresses fundamental cooking skills, nutrition and sanitation standards. Students learn the

**SMU EDUCATION**

basics of culinary arts in classes for 30 hours per week, with emphasis on "trade math," personal and professional management included.

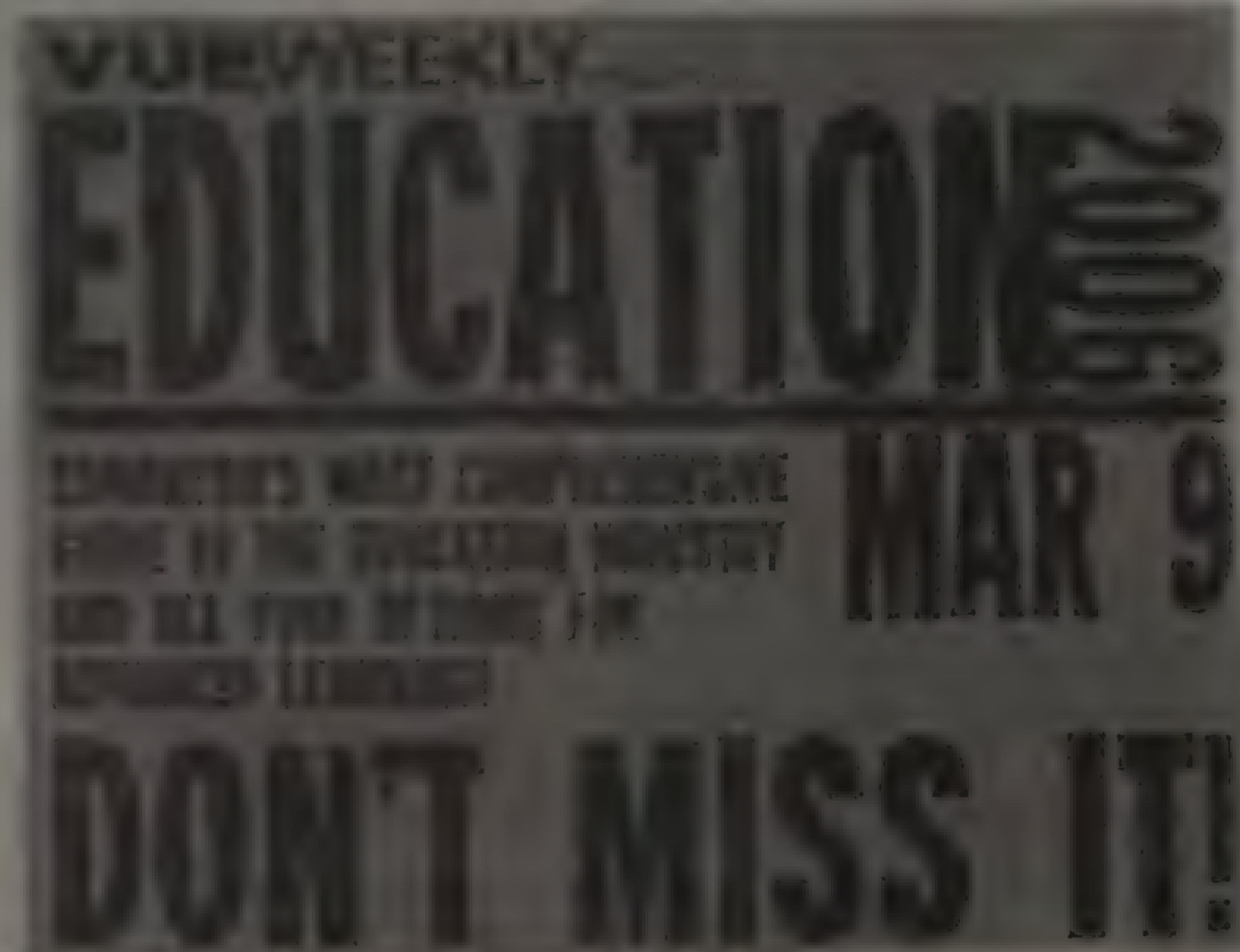
"In the first year, students learn the basics from all different areas of cooking," says Norman Brownlee, Pastry Instructor for the NAIT School of Hospitality. Brownlee has been in the field since 1988 and an instructor since 2000.

The certificate is enough for many students simply interested in learning their way around a kitchen—whether a restaurant's or their own.

**FOR THE REST**, the two year diploma program adds the additional level of culinary skill, experience and creativity. Students explore their presentation skills and learn how their prepared meals can be arranged most aesthetically on the plate. They are encouraged to use more creativity in assembling meals, at the risk of some pretty horrendous combinations.

Students participate in special event dinners and travel to culinary competitions, including a Singaporean competition at the end of April.

Brownlee is one of the instructors taking students to the competition. "Six NAIT students will



compete in a hot food competition," he explains. "where they produce a three-course meal for four within one hour."

The second competition is in cold food where a hot dish is prepared but served cold to demonstrate its artistic appeal.

"NAIT students attend international competitions every couple of years, either the one in Singapore or one in Germany," Brownlee says. NAIT usually earns medals at these competitions.

For diploma students, both lab work and final exams happen at Ernest's. This haven for fine dining on the NAIT campus was named after the father of the benefactors for the Hokanson Centre for Culinary Arts.

Ernest's is the crown jewel of the culinary arts program, and the four-star restaurant is an ideal spot to sample creations from budding chefs in surroundings of understated ele-

Culinary arts students have other opportunities to get involved, as well. Le Club Culinaire is a student-managed group with a couple of faculty

advisors. They coordinate student events and keep the program plugged into the needs of the community while pursuing opportunities to develop their skills.

Last Thanksgiving, NAIT students fed over 2 000 people at the Boyle Street Co-op. They regularly provide dinners to the Edmonton Women's Shelter

**FOR THOSE LESS INTERESTED** in the arts and more interested in forging towards a career as soon as possible, NAIT also offers a cook apprenticeship program. Six months of class time is broken into manageable eight-week segments, and a further 42 full-time weeks on the job earns your papers.

At the end of the apprenticeship, the well-rounded student has learned cutting and classification of various meats, menu costing and portion control, as well as the creation of pastries and desserts common to the industry. Training in wines, spirits and beers was added in 1999. They can also

supervise, train and coach apprentices themselves.

"In the program, we demo the skills required and then they work on their own projects," says Brownlee.

When students have a chance to exercise their creativity, the results can impress both teacher and student. After the program, students work all over Europe, on cruise ships or in their home town.

At about \$3 500 a year, including tuition and supplies, a culinary arts education teaches students to cut through the veils of secrecy that surround this art, this craft.

The NAIT program has a wide appeal, attracting local dilettantes and serious students from around the world, including the Philippines, Australia and the United States. The culinary team's medal-winning performances at competitions only raise the School's profile.

Each gushing review of Ernest's Fine Dining heralds it as one of Edmonton's great finds. They must be doing something right. □

## Your first lesson in food

**BRAISE (BRAYZ)** A cooking method where meat or vegetables are first browned in butter and/or oil, then cooked in a covered pot in a small amount of cooking liquid at low heat for a long period of time. This slow cooking process both tenderizes the food by breaking down fibres and creates a full-flavored dish.

**DEMI-GLACE (DEHM-EE GLAHS)** A rich brown sauce made from reduced veal and beef stock that is used to make classic sauces. This is the stuff that gives those sauces you are served at fancy

restaurants that velvety texture and sheen.

**ENDIVE** Often confused with its cousin, chicory, there are three main varieties of this leaf vegetable: Belgian endive, curly endive and escarole. They're used mainly in salads, but can also be briefly cooked and eaten as a vegetable or in soups.

**VINAIGRETTE** A cold sauce made from a mixture of vinegar, oil, pepper, salt and flavourings used to dress green salads. □

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# SMALL CAMPUS BIG OPPORTUNITIES

ALBERTA

Vikings can teach us all—not just kids—about bullies

## PREVIEW

FRI FEB 24 (7 PM)  
**NAMI NAMERSSON: THE VIKING WHO LIKED TO NAME THINGS**

BRYAN CARROLL / bryan@vneweekly.com

The world can be a scary place sometimes and people can be mean, but Concrete Theatre's *Nami Namersson: The Viking Who Liked to Name Things* tries to show kids and adults that respect is important

"It's important to ensure that your kid isn't a bully and that they're not being bullied," explains assistant director Jared Matsunaga-Turnbull "but it's not just for kids, it also applies to the workplace."

In fact, *Nami Namersson*—in which a

predatory American foreman policy

that connects to the world at large in exist within the story, it's not me in the esse

It's looking at colonialism in all forms: for kids that's bullying and

adults that's the way the world is

## THE GATEWAY

the Sprouts Festival, which is de

the Sprouts Festival is a big part of that

It's great to see the growth and it's

when we present them," says Mar

sunaga-Turnbull. "But ultimately it's

# While it's rather light fare, *Guys and Dolls* does have flair

MUSICAL'S OLD-TIMEY CONVICTIONS ASIDE, CITADEL PRODUCTION HAS FUN IN ALL THE RIGHT PLACES

CAROLYN HODDYM / carolyn@vneweekly.com

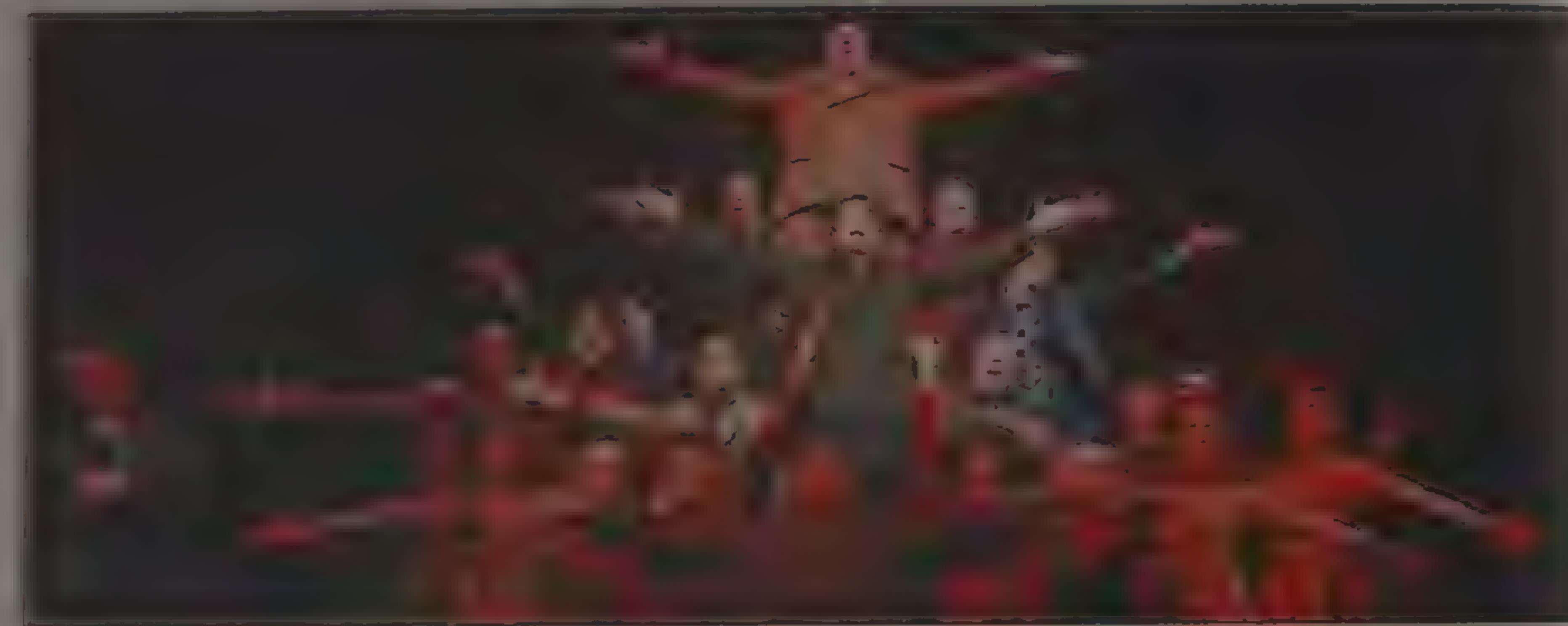
**F**rom the first moment the suited dandies flirt with shapey chorus girls, the opening choreography of *Guys and Dolls* truly sets the stage for the excitement of late 1940s New York City.

Like many, I survived a high school production of the musical, so I had the same kind of trepidation that I watched the performers fill the stage during the opening number.

But aside from a few early-show missteps, the Citadel's production revved up the atmosphere, and Brian Perchaluk's Broadway Avenue set dazzled with a sense of the Big Apple.

As the show that epitomizes Broadway glitz, *Guys and Dolls* tells the lighthearted stories of bookie Nathan Detroit (Gordon Tanner) and showgirl Miss Adelaide's (Jennifer Lyon) 14-year engagement and the unlikely pairing of compulsive gambler Sky Masterson (John Devorski).

unashamedly kitschy musical theatre. None of the characters are too deep here, and some of the senti



ments are pretty outdated.

In "Marry the Man Today," for example, Adelaide and Sarah sing "And if he ever tries to stray from you / Have a pot roast / Have a headache / Have a baby / Have two!"

That said, *Guys and Dolls* is also a hell of a lot of fun to watch, if only because it's so hopelessly romantic.

**DO IT LEADING MEN** performances. Tanner's Nathan Detroit is the perfectly likeable

## REVUE

**NOTHIN' BUT A HONEY**  
**GUYS AND DOLLS**

DIRECTED BY ROBB PATERSON  
WRITTEN BY DAMON RUNYON, FRANK LOESSER,  
JO SWERLING, ABE BURROWS  
STARRING GORDON TANNER, MAIRI BABB,  
JOHN DEVORSKI, JENNIFER LYON  
SHOCTOR THEATRE, THE CITADEL, \$45 - \$80

sleazeball that the audience can't help but root for, even as the commitment-phobic gambling man puts off marriage for yet another day.

And Devorski's Sky Masterson is as suave as can be. Although he's no Marlon Brando (who portrayed the role in the 1956 screen version), Devorski has the understated strut and deep vocals needed to turn the prim Sarah Brown into mush.

Of course, by the show's end when the cast flows out under the bright lights of the Broadway Avenue set, everybody's hearts are right there with Sarah's, and the audience is left not hopeless, but hopefully romantic. ▶

## Was the west won with toy guns? In *Johnny Guitar: The Musical*, maybe

SONYA SULO / sonya@vneweekly.com

**A**fter *Johnny Guitar: The Musical* opens at the Shubert Theatre on Feb. 27, Tim Ryan twirling a plastic gun and singing "I'm a Gun" will be the last time you'll see a gun in a musical. Dressed in western duds

It looked like the actors were really getting into the spirit of things, which is exactly what Ryan intended when casting these recent MacEwan grads

as a great vehicle for these. Ryan says, "The piece has a

Based on the 1953 movie starring

PREVIEW  
**JOHNNY GUITAR**  
DIRECTED BY TIM RYAN  
BOOK BY NICHOLAS LARSON  
MUSIC BY JEFFREY LARSON  
LYRICS BY NICHOLAS LARSON  
STARRING KIM RYAN, JENNIFER MACLEAN,  
KATHY RYAN, HEATHER RYAN, TIM RYAN,  
JESSICA RYAN, KATIE RYAN, KATIE RYAN

lighthearted approach to the story of conflict between two tough ladies in a small New Mexico town.

Although there is a feminist angle to the story, it's not Ryan's main focus.

The most important thing is, it's

STILL THAT DOESN'T MEAN the show is nothing but pure, unfiltered fluff. The songs reflect a great deal of character depth and make some insightful observations about the way women are viewed.

At the same time, the musical is also an intertextual reflection on the

"The movie was written kind of as a reaction to the McCarthy years," Ryan comments. "One of the lead characters, Emma, presents herself as a puritanical and upright person, but in actual fact she tries to destroy anybody that gets in her way. So the Emma aspect of the story reflects the McCarthy Hearings."

"Other than that," Ryan continues,

and musicals, a comment on the original movie—which is just steeped in Freudian imagery and psychological undercurrents."

Ryan also wants to maintain the emotional intensity of the original in his own production. Having the audience sit on either side of the stage in an almost saloon-like setting will definitely help break the fourth wall. However, Ryan doesn't want to let the drama overwhelm the comedic aspects of the show either.

"The biggest challenge right now though, is finding holsters and guns and a roulette wheel," Ryan continues. "We have a line on some, but in the spirit of the piece, if we ended up using plastic guns it wouldn't be that bad." ▶

# Velvet Shock saves best for last and uses well its talented cast

DAVID BERRY / [david@vneweekly.com](mailto:david@vneweekly.com)

**S**tewart Lemoine is the type of artist who, even when he's off, is on. It's an admirable talent to have, and it's displayed rather adroitly in the remounting of his 1997 play *The Velvet Shock*.

*Shock* is a back-heavy bit of a play, paced a little oddly—the intermission drifts in on a fairly unremarkable scene, and most of the insidious build-up to the titular shock (can't tell you about it, of course) takes place in the last scene—with dialogue that's suitably snappy but not quite as sharp as Lemoine at his best.

While these disadvantages would stick out in most plays, Lemoine and his talented cast manage to turn them into a double play that's both lightly humourous and chillingly emotional when it needs to be.

It sets itself up in Salzburg, as soprano diva Margherita D'Invemo

REVIEW

TO SAT, MAR 4

**THE VELVET SHOCK**

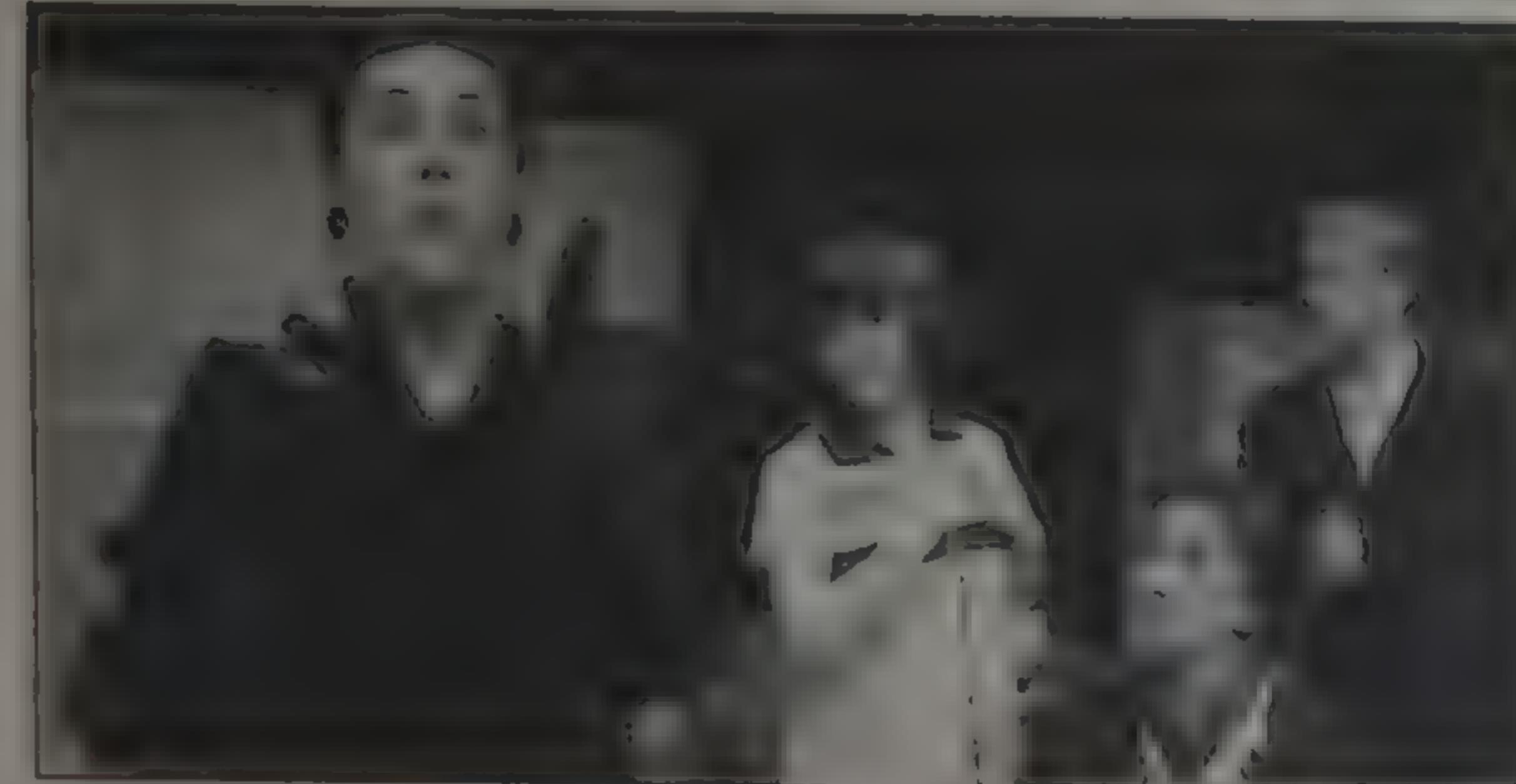
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY STEWART LEMOINE  
STARRING SHERI SOMERVILLE, CLARICE ECKFORD,  
MATT ALDEN, CORALIE CAIRNS  
VARSOCNA THEATRE, \$18

(Sheri Somerville) and her niece Vicki (Clarice Eckford) prepare for a sold-out concert.

When an old school friend of Margherita's (Coralie Cairns, who hits her mark perfectly) shows up with a surprise involving a local waiter (Matt Alden), all their lives are changed, though not in the ways each was expecting.

**AS WITH MOST LEMOINE PLAYS**, a fair deal of the emotional attachment involves the natural charm of the cast, and he's picked a good quartet for his

MEMO



Clarice Eckford has a spitsfire nervous energy that seems a bit overbearing at first, but she settles in to the role of chatty comic relief fairly easily

Matt Alden manages to seduce with an affable schoolboy charm through most of the play, but still finds enough inner turmoil to get

downright scary when things turn

**IT MIGHT BE EASY** to overlook

Somerville's performance for her singing, but as the anchor of the play, she too manages a nice transition, hers from detached diva to a woman with remarkable cunning, with a

razor tongue throughout

The show would probably hit its mark better if it weren't for the script, which is sadly the weak point. There's a fairly large lag in the middle, where it feels as though the play hovers between airy and sinister, not quite sure which way it wants to go. And instead of transitioning smoothly, it essentially just feels a bit empty, a gulf where a bridge should be.

As mentioned, Lemoine et al do find their footing when they need it. But one can't help but feel the strong ending would have been considerably more powerful with more of a natural build.

The production still manages to pull it off, though, which speaks to the overall talent involved here. The set up may be a bit jarring, but the cast manages to put a chill up the spine by the end anyway, which is what a shock is all about, isn't it? □

## Poster show helps aging scenesters remember the glory days of punk

DARREN ZENKO / [darren@vneweekly.com](mailto:darren@vneweekly.com)

**G**ig posters are a key part of a city's feel, the cornerstone of the look of a scene.

As public art, your average photocopied flyer for some two-practice garage band's first neighbourhood pub gig is seen by more people than any 20 gallery paintings put together—at least before it's buried by another layer of staple-gunned foolscap or stripped off by souvenir-hunting fans.

And for a decade beginning in 1987, the streetside look of Edmonton punk marketing was defined in large part by the work of illustrator Bob Proder.

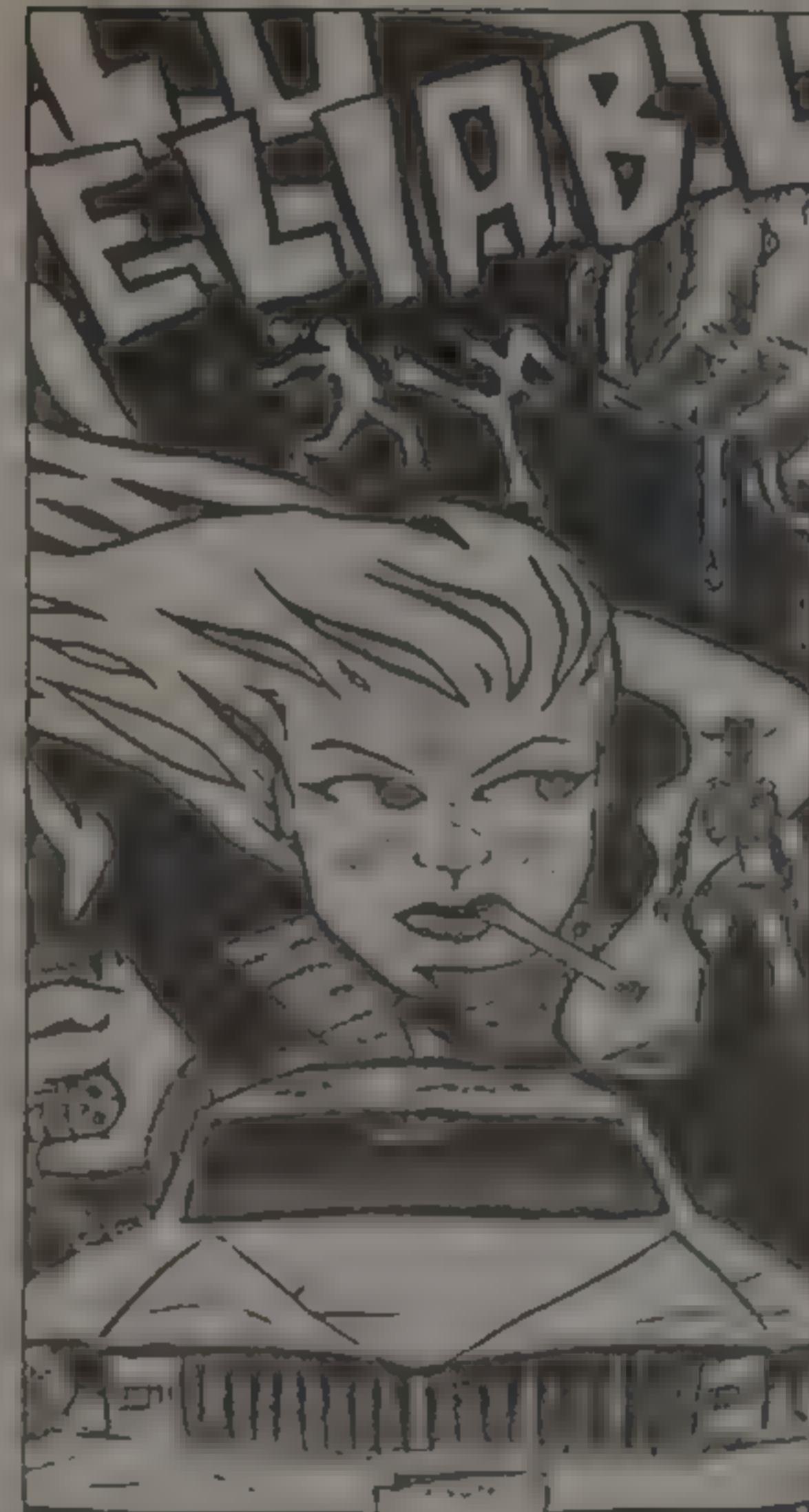
It all started in the halls of that perennial punk-rock hotbed, Victoria Composite.

"I was in a drama class or something with [then-fledgling gig promoter] Todd Flintstone," Proder recalls, "and I was like 'Oh, you promote shows? Let me do the poster!'"

Dating from his first posters for Flintstone-hustled gigs at the Multi-Purpose Rumpus Room, through CJRS gigs and shows at the Ambassador, Proder's body of work—a couple hundred or so (posters of which will be on display at Avenue Skatepark's Bad Art for Bad People show on Feb 24)—is a record of our punk past, a memory capsule of defunct acts and venues.

"When we got into it, the old guys thought that we were the young punks," Proder says. "Now when I go to shows, people are, like, 'Whoa, you've been around forever!' and I'm, like, 'Well not really; I didn't see Dead Kennedys in 1984, you know?' I guess when you get older, you hit a point where you're just like 'Whoa! I've been going to gigs for 20 years ... !'"

**INSPIRED BY OLDER-SCHOOL** locals like Bart and southern California punk



PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24

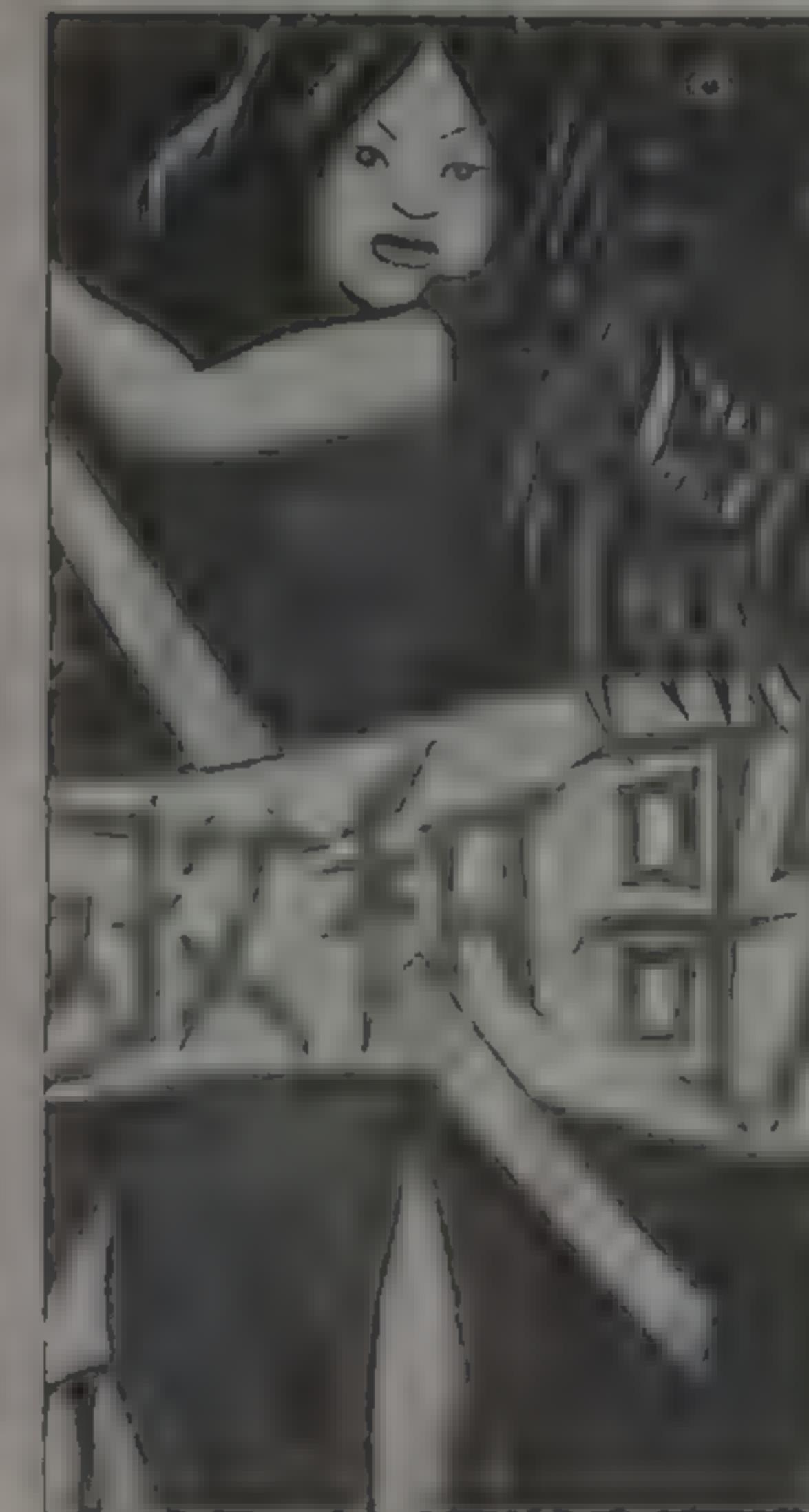
**BAD ART FOR BAD PEOPLE**

BY BOB PRODER  
MUSIC FROM BUDDY PLUGGSOT & TEX ASS MIKEY,  
THE SUBATOMICS, FAT GUY, THE LITTLE COATS  
AVENUE SKATEPARK

Illustrators like Kozik (whom he laments as having gone "too pop"). Proder just wanted to make some attractive posters.

"I knew what I didn't like ... especially when computers came into play," he says. "Then all the posters became just a picture from the band's press kit, with type around it. They're totally non-collectible."

"What I loved," Proder continues, "what I liked to see, was, like, a No Rebate poster with a drawing by Bart on it, and it was, like, 'This is an awe-



some drawing; the poster looks wicked. It's black on lime green ... I want to put that on my wall!' I just contributed to the black-and-white punk-rock look. It's a classic. That's the chosen form of expression, the chosen medium."

Now a professionally trained illustrator and comics creator—his two-year-old *Wine, Women and Song* miniseries will soon have its fourth issue—Proder only gets around to doing four or five posters a year.

"It's ironic," he says, "I went to school, and after I went to school, that's when I stopped doing posters. Now I've got graphic design skills and typographic skills, and I'm not using them. I didn't have them when I was doing hundreds of posters, and now that I have them I'm not using them. I guess it's the punk-rock philosophy." □

## Last goodbyes for Monty

CAROLYN NIKODYM / [carolyn@vneweekly.com](mailto:carolyn@vneweekly.com)

**OBIT** **MEMORIAL**  
T he Edmonton theatre community will have an opportunity to celebrate the life of one of its luminaries on Sun, Feb 26.

Albert "Monty" Montgomery died Feb 13 at the age of 87. He was known for decades of behind-the-scenes contributions to many Edmonton theatres.

Montgomery began his lighting

career when Victoria Composite High School's theatre was brand new. In 2000, he received the Elizabeth Stirling Lifetime Achievement Award.

A memorial in Vic Comp's theatre will be held at 2 pm Sunday. □



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Family  
Reunion? Nah.  
Better never  
to see this  
family again

COMEDY

OPENS FRI, FEB 24  
MADEA'S FAMILY  
REUNION

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY TYLER PERRY  
STARRING PERRY, ROCHELLE AYTES,  
BLAIR UNDERWOOD

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vneweekly.com

Writer-director-producer-composer-star Tyler Perry's *Madea's Family Reunion* is a film as over-stuffed with conflicting ambitions as Perry's role is over-hyphenated.

Few opening credit sequences feature the same name so frequently and few films suffer from this particular mania to be all things at once to its designated audience, a hungry niche market that's presumably black, middle-class, Christian and protective of old-school family values.



THIS SUCKS

To say that Perry (who also wrote and starred in *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*) tries to balance an absurd palate of ethics and entertainment is an understatement.

On one hand, a large part of the film's melodramatic side is concerned with getting a gorgeous, demure and clearly damaged (not to mention vacuous) young woman away from her rich but physically abusive fiancé.

**YET IN THE BROADLY** comic sections, Perry gets into drag to play the titular, tough-love mother figure, an almost funny and definitely frightening big momma who thinks nothing of beating the shit out of any rascally kids who cross her path.

The film has too many mixed yet heavy-handed messages. Beating your spouse: bad! Beating small children: good!

We're to pat ourselves on the back for enjoying Perry's warm fuzzies and (overwritten) tearful monologues about overcoming adversity, but then turn a blind eye to his hypocritical crudities.

One could write a review solely addressing the film's arch acting, soapy clichés, bloated running time and stupefying tackiness, but I think its best to concentrate on meeting Perry on his own base terms: his shameless moralizing not only rings false, but has resigned itself to preaching strictly to the converted. ▀

HERESY! / 28

RUNNING SCARED / 31

DECOYS 2 - BEHIND THE SCENES / 32

# She's a coal-miner's documentarian

BARBARA KOPPLE'S 1976 *HARLAN COUNTY, USA* REVEALS THE DIGNITY OF THE MINER

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vneweekly.com

Given the current popularity and proliferation of documentaries, the time is ripe to look back to *Harlan County, USA*

Barbara Kopple's devastating 1976 Oscar-winner profiles a grueling 18-month Kentucky miner's strike in which the stakes involved are not only the acquisition of a union, but also the abhorrent working and living conditions

In the plainest visual language, *Harlan County* reveals the shameful state the miners were forced to live in and the powerful, violent, fear-mongering and largely vigilante-founded anti-union apparatus they had to contend with. But the film also uncovers the strength, dignity and rich culture (especially musical) fostered within the mining community

When we spoke, I asked her about her recent prolificism and the themes

Q&amp;A

FRI - MON, FEB 24 - 27 (9 PM)

**HARLAN COUNTY, USA**DIRECTED BY BARBARA KOPPLE  
METRO CINEMA, \$8

Kopple's partisan stance is crucial in enabling *Harlan County* to fully immerse the viewer into the world of its subjects, the individuals who, in the heat of their struggle to literally survive, remain firmly lodged in the film's heart

**THIRTY YEARS AFTER** her triumphant debut, Kopple seems busier than ever. Currently, she's in the midst of making a documentary about the Dixie Chicks and the tumultuous years they've had following their criticisms of President Bush

When we spoke, I asked her about her recent prolificism and the themes

linking her latest projects. She shrugged off any imposing notion of an elaborate personal vision guiding her work, preferring to emphasize a simple, abiding belief in the value of documentary filmmaking as an adventurous artform, a method of political activism and a way of life

Not unlike *Harlan County*, the Dixie Chicks film is "just a wonderful story of change, how sometimes you just have to get out there, take a risk and do something you believe in," Kopple explains

**VUE WEEKLY:** Tell me how *Harlan County* started.

**BARBARA KOPPLE:** It started with this movement called Miners for Democracy. A few years before, Jock Yablonsky and his wife and daughter were murdered because Yablonsky ran against the then-president of the

United Mine Workers, this guy named Tony Boyle.

The miners were so outraged that rank and file miners decided to run against Boyle for their union. So I wanted to see what that was all about

In *Harlan County*, they were trying to unionize, so I went there to see if they'd really see it through and help Eastern Kentucky get their union which of course they did. That journey became the film's focus

**VW:** Did you have any idea you'd wind up spending years on this?

**DK:** Of course not. You never know with documentaries. You have to simply move with your instinct and have a great curiosity about people

# Russian dancing, yes; squat-kicking, no

OLD-TIMEY SOVIET BALLET COMPANIES' FIERCE COMPETITION SHOWS IT JUST TAKES TWO TO TANGO

BRIAN GIBSON / brian@vneweekly.com

A two-hour ballet documentary sounds like a film just for fans of arabesques, glissades, and pirouettes

But *Ballets Russes*, which focuses on the grand pointe-off between two historic dance companies in the '30s and '40s, may offer an enjoyable night out even for those

entranced by buff bodies in tutus and tights performing an exquisite, self-torturing pantomime on stage

(Plus this way you don't have to get on a plane to Moscow. You can regularly afford ballet tickets.)

While *Ballets Russes* does not,

DOCUMENTARY

FRI - MON, FEB 24 - 27 (7 PM)

**BALLET RUSSE**

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY DANIEL GELLER,

NARRATED BY MARIAN SEDLES

METRO CINEMA, \$8

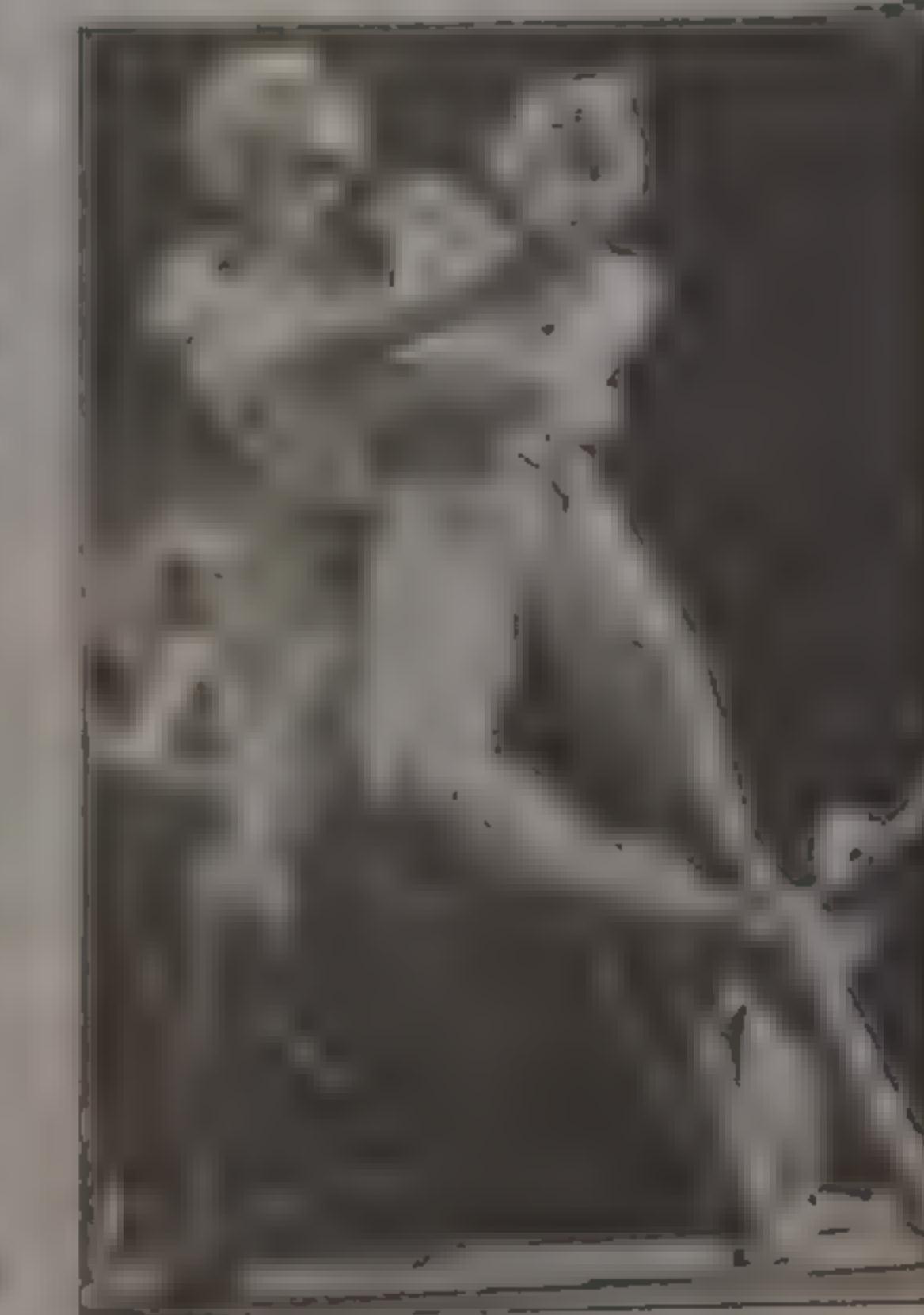
unfortunately, show enough extended dance footage, Dan Geller and Dayna Goldfine offer a charming tribute to the two Ballets Russes companies, bookended by scenes from the reunion of both companies' members in New Orleans in 2000

The curtain rises in 1929, when the

great Sergei Diaghilev had died and with him, it was thought, had gone his storied Ballets Russes company. Two years later, though, Vasili de Basil co-founded Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, with Diaghilev regular George Balanchine as choreographer

Three teenage girls—"baby ballerinas"—from the diasporas of post-Revolution Russian refugees in Europe were made the company's stars: Tania Riabouchinska, Tamara Toumanova, and Irina Baronova.

Soon, Balanchine was pushed out and replaced by Leonide Massine, who offered new ballets by the fistful each year. Massine introduced the



# Not even a talented cast redeems lame *Doogal*

TRENT WILKIE / trent@vnewweekly.com

**W**hat do the new animated film *Doogal* and *Fever Pitch* have in common? They both would have been better movies if Jimmy Fallon were born without a tongue.

Fallon, who voices Dylan the stoned bunny in *Doogal*, nearly single-handedly ruins this sometimes-fun (and confusing) children's film.

Based on the popular BBC show, *Doogal* is a mish-mash of poor story pacing and obscure pop-culture references with Fallon at the annoying helm.

The plot has Doogal (Daniel Tay) and his comrades Dylan, Brian (William H Macy) and Ermintude (Whoopi Goldberg) travelling all over in search of three magical stones to save their friend Frances (Kylie Minogue).

With barely any introduction or explanation of who they are and what they are doing, the film's spartan opening seems to expect the audience to know the characters are and immediately jumps into the plot.

**AS THE STORY** develops, there are several instances where it blatantly resembles *Lord of the Rings*. From calling the group a fellowship to the scene on a cliff perched high above a

ANIMATION

OPENS FRI, FEB 24

**DOOGAL**

DIRECTED BY BUTCH HARTMAN  
WRITTEN BY SERGE HABIT, MARY C. KELLY  
VOICES BY JIMMY FALLON, JON STEWART,  
DANIEL TAY, WILLIAM H. MACY, WHOOPIE GOLDBERG

THIS SUCKS

sea of lava, the script comes across as lazy. Dylan even goes so far as to mimic Gollum with Fallon's half-dead voice droning on and on.

The film goes obviously off the mark when Dylan makes a joke about the Wu Tang Clan that left the theatre silent. None of the four-year-olds in the audience seemed to know who Ol' Dirty Bastard was.

The only real highlights of the film, aside from the stunning animated landscapes and vistas, come from a flatulent moose voiced by Kevin Smith. Although the part is extremely limited, you can never go wrong with fart jokes.

Brilliant flatulence aside though, the film's tired dialogue seriously saps it of any fun. Fallon's mindless referencing and Stewart's boring bad guy, combined with Goldberg's monotonous droning, made the movie seem like it was trying way too hard.

**IN THE END,** despite *Doogal's* impressive roster of talent, it just doesn't have any of the magic its characters are looking for. ▶

# Jackson's King Kong remake only perpetuates thinly veiled racism of 1933 original

have crash-landed into the film from somewhere light years beyond the nearest solar system of credibility—like the one where a herd of house-high dinosaurs stampedes down a gully and only crushes a few of the fleeing humans underfoot.

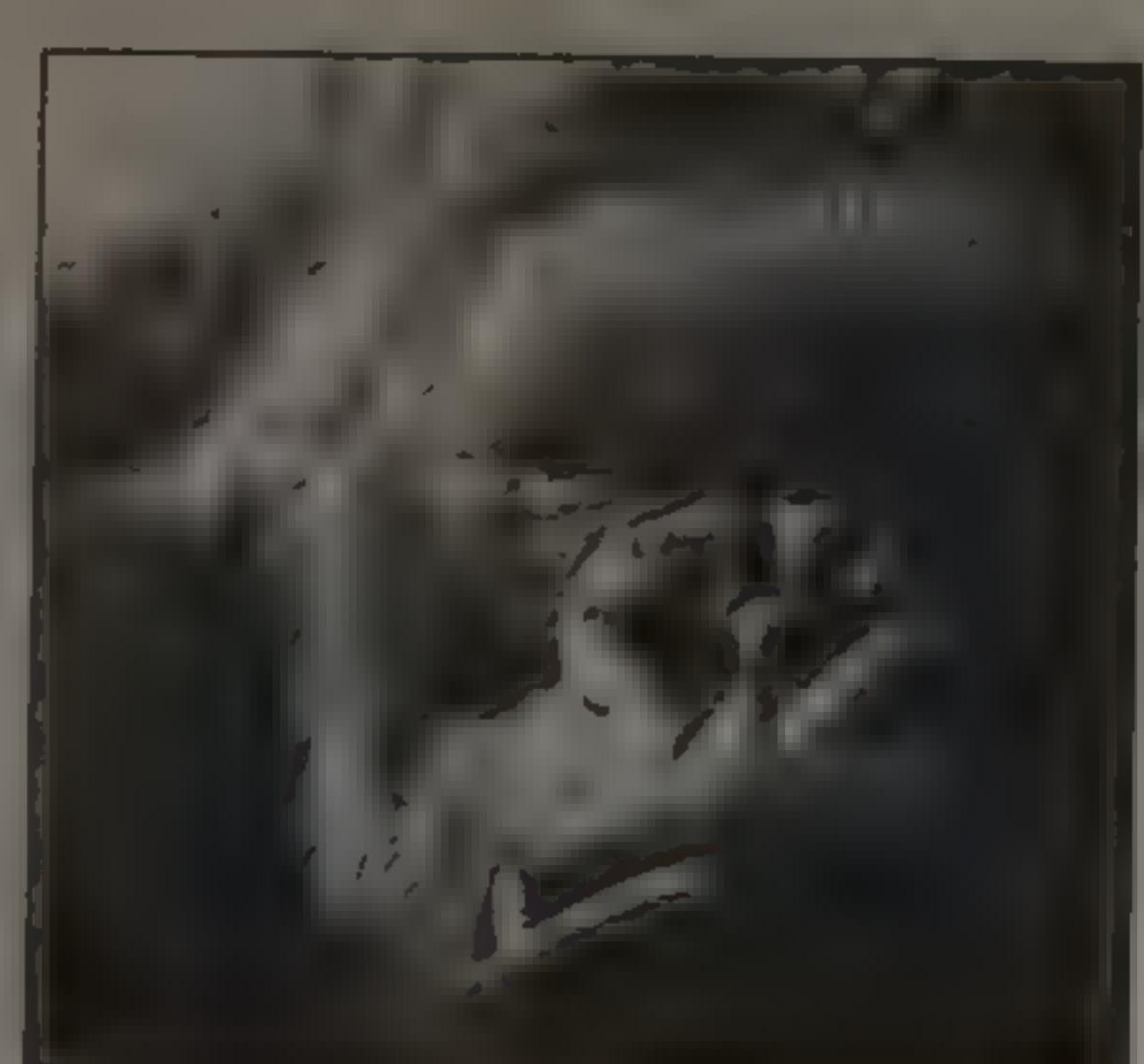
By the end of Jackson's *F/Xtravaganza*, the plot and characters of *Donkey Kong* seem more three-dimensional and complex, mostly because of the blithe racism of this remake.

The racially reductive overtones of *King Kong* are obvious—African monster eyes white woman, whom white men must save; beast is misunderstood and eventually killed, but his love for her was always impossible—and Jackson's adaptation only bolsters the sense of racial threat in the story.

On Skull Island, for example, the crew's first confrontation with the foreign and wild comes when they fight filthy, zombie-like savages, whose glowering eyes and jagged teeth, along with their apparent cannibalism and slavish thrall to their ape-god, mark them out as appallingly base and feral; Kong seems warmly, wonderfully human by comparison.

(And how come the natives can build a fortress and drawbridge—but not boats so they could leave this super-sized mutant hellscape?)

The crew, desperate to sail home, suddenly has a change of heart when



Ann Darrow is kidnapped by one of those dastardly natives. So they all plod through an island of dinosaurs, giant insects, and mega-bats for a full day to save the imperiled actress.

Along the way, unfortunately, Asian Man Of No Lines, Wise Black Mentor To White Boy, and Token New Zealand Maori Character are killed off in the quest for the blonde, blue-eyed princess. Oh, well.

Cut to the climax, where Ann Darrow's beautiful fairness, accentuated by her white dress, glows against Kong's black skin while they climb the world's biggest phallic symbol, before the rapacious foreign monster is brought down by the military might of the United States Army.

And then our Aryan heroine can, at last, swoon into the arms of single white male Jack Driscoll. ▶

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## Ballet movie not just for season ticket-holders

BY JENNIFER DUNN

symphonic ballet to London audiences in 1933 and increased the prominence of men in the company.

The company toured the US in 1934, but soon Basil and Massine clashed and, by 1937, Massine had created the new Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, while Basil formed the Original Ballets Russes. A battle for dancers and audiences began that would see, with the outbreak of war in Europe, the competing companies toeing the boards in Middle America, Hollywood and Latin America.

**BALLET NOW SEEMS** to exist in a rarefied, aristocratic, even pretentious air, so it's fascinating to see crowds of people lining up outside London theatres for ballet rehearsals (though the erotic appearances of the performers may have been the main draw) and to hear misty recollections of once-poor Russian émigrés dancing in costumes created by Matisse or Dali, in front of sets designed by Picasso and Miró.

The sight of Basil's company, with its artists nearly starving, in front of Latin American crowds seems an odd extravagance against the backdrop of World War II, while the clips of Massine's dancers in movies are an intriguing cinematic footnote.

Some of the prima ballerinas interviewed in the film, most of them in

their 70s or 80s, still show off the haughty confidence of their youth.

One remembers some young Russian dancers' protectively catty and vicariously competitive mothers exchanging cutting looks at performances, while another recalls a choreographer who wore white gloves while directing them so that she wouldn't have to touch the girls' sweaty bodies.

*Ballets Russes* would have been a better documentary if it had cut down on its American perspective, revealed more of the tough slog of training, and skirted around the spotlight glamour to expose more of the backstage liaisons and the politics lurking in the wings.

Only in the doc's final half-hour do we get a better glimpse of diva-ish personalities being slave-driven by taskmaster choreographers, unsettling racial politics, and one of the many romances flitting among the troupes.

The film mostly tries to preserve the veneer of pure art that glosses over the sweat, blood and tears of dancers straining and struggling to perfect graceful moves and statuesque poses.

But if *Ballets Russes* never fully explores the stubborn, arduous passion of ballet, as a survey of two great 20th-century dance companies, it skips along pleasantly enough from pointed anecdotes to historical footage before it closes with a stirring flourish. ▶

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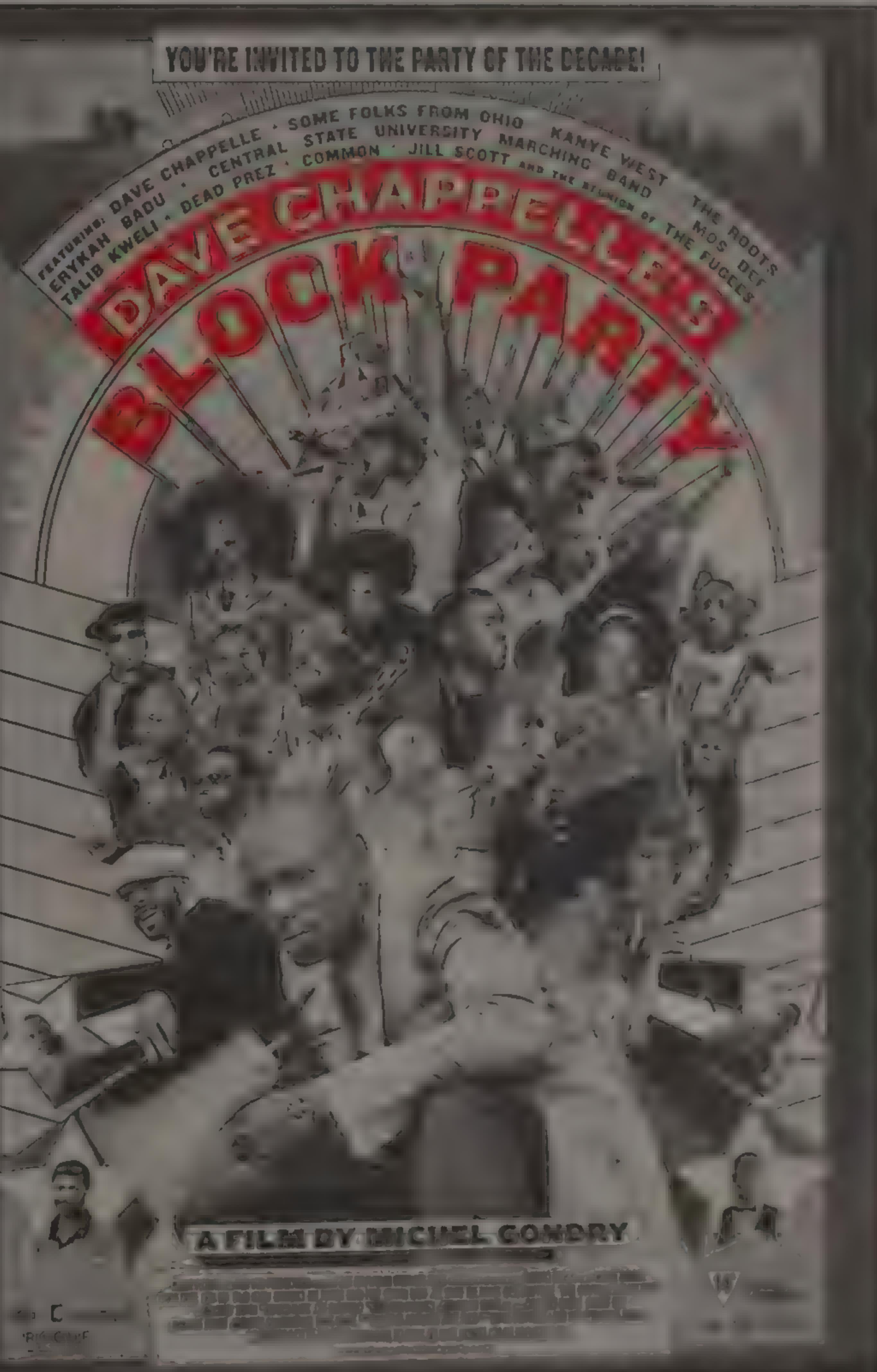
From The Director Of "THE COOLER"  
**PAUL WALKER**

# RUNNING SCARED

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# Screw objectivity—go for passion, says documentarian

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

**VW:** Financially speaking, how were you able to manage?

**BK:** First I got a loan for \$12 000, which I paid back the minute the film was finished. From there it was a matter of writing endless proposals and rallying people together.

All along the way it was hard, but you can't let something like money stop you from doing what you want to do.

**VW:** Something so valuable and so evident in the film is the sheer amount of time you spent in Harlan County, amongst these people, in their homes and meeting places, on the picket line and the roadblocks.

**BK:** Well, I really couldn't think of any place I'd rather be. The people became role models to me. To this day I consider *Harlan County* one of

the most incredible experiences in my life.

**VW:** So you kept waiting it out, even though it might not amount to anything influential. Did you realize what danger you were in?

**BK:** Eventually, yes. There was a point when the strikebreakers told us if they ever caught us alone at night they'd kill us. So we stayed at one of the miners' homes and we were never out alone. Still, they shot at us with machine guns.

When they were coming across the bridge that day at early dawn, they went right for the crew. In the film, you can see me doing sound and walking toward them, thinking they're not going to hurt a woman. But they got me and the cameraperson and Anne [Lewis], who was

**VW:** Amongst the miners, did you feel hostility arise from your being outsiders?

**BK:** Initially nobody trusted us: we had to prove ourselves. But we were there for the long haul and people opened up, especially because we were living with a miner's family.

We'd all sit on the porch at night and talk. We got to know each other, became close. When I see those people today, there's still that close feeling.

**VW:** While all this was happening, were you consciously adhering to or straying from the then established rules of *cinema vérité* and objectivity?

**BK:** No. Doing a documentary doesn't mean you have to have objectivity.

When not doing straight journalism, I believe it's better if you feel passionate about the characters and the story. There are no rules. And by

then, we had people like the Maysles brothers [*Gimme Shelter*], whom I worked with early on, and their films set a strong example of that.

**VW:** Was it important for you to end the film somewhat anti-climactically, with no sweeping resolution or summaries?

**BK:** Well, the miners got their contract. We showed that. And then we had to show that they're still struggling for safety in the mine, for the right to strike, for a lot of the same issues within their union.

In the end, someone was killed trying to get this union, but even with the union, you have to keep on fighting.

I don't think it was anti-climactic, I think it just showed that we're not finished yet, that we have to keep going. If *Harlan County* is about anything, it's about perseverance. ▶

# Eight hot dogs wither in Antarctic winter

**FAMILY**

NOW PLAYING

**EIGHT BELOW**

DIRECTED BY FRANK MARSHALL

WRITTEN BY DAVID DIGILIO

STARRING PAUL WALKER, BRUCE GREENWOOD

RUNNING TIME: 110 mins

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vneweekly.com

Disney's *Eight Below*, based on the 1983 Japanese film *Nankoku Monogatari*, tells the story of a two-man Antarctic meteorite-finding expedition thwarted by a wicked tempest where, in all the hullabaloo to evacuate camp, eight handsome and hard-working sled dogs get left behind.



THIS IS OK

While no one's happy about this—especially not the ambitious scientist (Bruce Greenwood) who is seemingly punished for dreaming of faraway planets while disobeying the warnings of nature—it's our heroic wilderness guide, the unambiguously named Jerry Sheppard (Paul Walker), who takes it really, really hard.

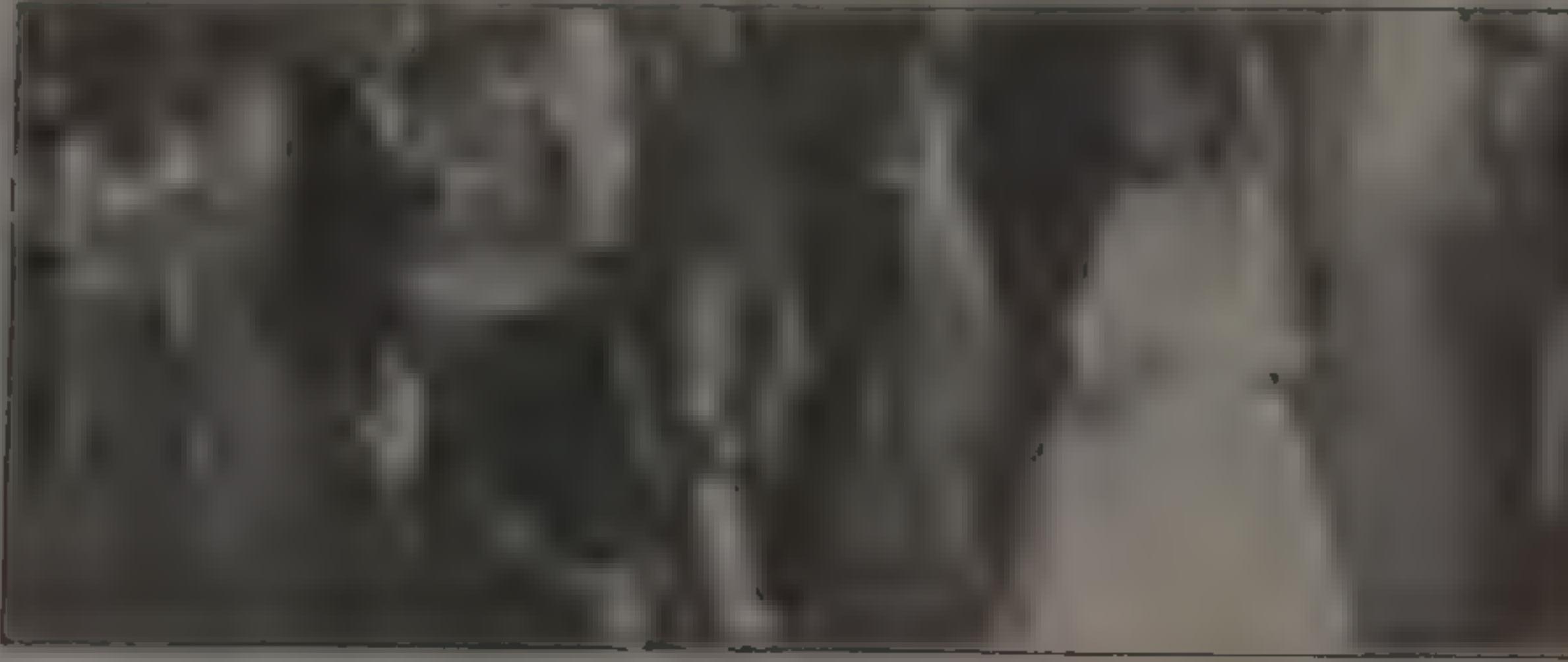
His inner torment about abandoning his eight best friends resembles pure obsession. Months pass and the unlucky pooches must surely have succumbed to desolation and brutal winter weather, but Jerry lays awake nights until he finds a way to return and, if not rescue them, at least know their fate.

**AT TWO HOURS,** *Eight Below* is a lot of dog movie, particularly since its ideal audience is kids. Its characters are a bit flat, if not extraneous (like Jason Biggs's ostensible comic relief), while the dogs are endearing and fun to watch, if not exactly on par with *The Littlest Hobo*.

Yet the film does offer fantastic vistas: blinding white snow and cobalt skies, snow scattering serenely across undulating ice fields, frozen seas and beached whales.

Walker's hardly the most interesting actor in the world, but he perfectly serves as a handsome not-too-deep, dog-loving jock leaving the spotlight to his canine survivors, who work together to keep fed and hold out for inevitable salvation.

Frank Marshall's direction and Christopher Rouse's editing suffer from padding (there's a particular excess of reaction shots), but the action scenes are engaging and refreshingly clear, while not too freaky for the little ones. ▶



## Spymate has a tired monkey on its back

SONYA SOLO / sonya@vneweekly.com

Chris Potter is probably best remembered for his television role in *Kung Fu: The Legend Continues*, as a detective whose father, a butt-kicking Shaolin priest, always pulled him out of every predicament.

His son, Amelia (Emma Roberts), is a secret agent, and it's not his father but a chimpanzee who's always saving his ass.

The change is not for the better—although this is in no way the

Mike Muggins (Potter) and Minkey (the chimp) were part of an elite spy team until Mike retired in order to raise his daughter Amelia (Emma Roberts), who grows up to

But when Amelia is kidnapped by a mad scientist who wants to use her invention for his own evil purposes, Mike and Minkey come out of retirement to save her.

Aided by a long-lost dog and some hype, the team travels to Jamaica and Japan on a quest to unravel the mystery and save the girl.

It seems like your average family-friendly movie, and it is. Very average. A formulaic script leaves the actors to work with characters that

COMEDY

OPENS FRI, FEB 24

**SPYMATE**

DIRECTED BY ROBERT VINCE

WRITTEN BY VINCE, ANNA MCROBERTS

STARRING CHRIS POTTER, EMMA ROBERTS

RUNNING TIME: 90 mins

are flat, even for a spy flick. While there are some failed attempts to make the father-daughter relationship more dynamic by introducing the fact that Amelia doesn't believe her father is a spy, their interactions

it doesn't help that the acting is

weak and unconvincing.

**THE GOOD NEWS** is this film is perfectly harmless, being a sex- and violence-free version of a James Bond flick. All the gadgets and spy speak are simplified so that a seven-year-old could easily understand them.

The monkey has a name: "Minkey the Monkey," an enemy agent reports ominously to his superior. Well, if you think about it, the dialogues in a

While analytically minded adults may find this movie annoying, young children will enjoy it—although the credit should go not to the film-makers but to the chimp, who is the only one here doing an excellent job. ▶



# As thugsploitation vehicles go, Paul Walker's latest is *Running on empty*—not fear

HEARTTHROB IS TOO PRETTY TO BE A BELIEVABLE GANGSTER

TYSON KABAN / [tyson@vueweekly.com](mailto:tyson@vueweekly.com)

**A** hooker cries, "Lay off of me, you fuckin' gray-mouthed, limp-dicked mac daddy pimp!" after having her head slammed into a parked car's headlight by her infuriated boss, and a low-level gangster screams, "Fuck you! You fuckin' mothersuckin' fuck-head!" right before blowing off a crooked cop's junk with a pistol.

Those are just two of the many wonderful moments the thugsploitation flick *Running Scared* has to offer, and believe me, the fun doesn't end there.

There's enough gunshots and gore, full-frontal nudity (both shaved and *au naturel*, mind you), a pair of proper pedophiles straight out of Stepford, Russian crack-heads and hockey-playing goons who use pucks as devices of torture to delight even the most discriminating filmgoer.

And by "discriminating," I really mean "13-year-old who snuck into an R-rated and thinks guns, fast cars and boobs are awesome!"

**THE FILM'S "HERO"** Joey (Paul Walker) is the hired muscle for a New Jersey mob. After a drug deal goes south and three crooked cops are shot into Swiss cheese in the film's opening scene, Joey is put in charge of disposing of the evidence: a one-of-a-kind gun.

Instead of tossing the piece into a river, Joey hides the gun in his basement where his son's pal Oleg (Cameron Bright) comes upon it.

Oleg takes the gun to his home next door, only to shoot his meth-dealing, physically abusive step-dad before fleeing into the night with

COMEDY

OPENING FEB 24

**RUNNING SCARED**

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY WAYNE KRAMER  
STARRING PAUL WALKER, VERA FARMIGA,  
CAMERON BRIGHT

the incriminating evidence

Needless to say, Joey is not impressed and spends the night hunting down the kid and the gun in one sex-, curse-, blood-, gun- and naked lady-filled situation after another.

**BUT THERE IS** no suspense and each twist and turn is so lame you'll seriously find yourself laughing out loud in disbelief. Writer-director Wayne Kramer's talent clearly lies in making scripts more interesting by infusing them with every possible variation of the word "fuck," and unfortunately it seems as if his breakthrough script, 2003's critically-acclaimed *The Cooler*, was just a fluke (see 2004's *Mindhunters*).

As for the actors, Paul Walker's appearance detracts from his role; he's just way too clean-cut to convincingly play a dirty thug.

And even Cameron Bright, who demonstrated *Birth*, delivers each line so flatly that he comes off more like he's semi-retarded than a victimized youth.

This is quite possibly the most excessive, most unnecessary film ever made and only deserves as much attention as you would pay to a messy car crash: you drive by it, take a quick look and keep on driving.

Because no one really needs to see that. ▶

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# Local high school invaded by evil, human-eating aliens

trent@vneweekly.com

You'd think that visiting the set of a sci-fi, sex-spoof horror movie would be a lot like going to a college bush party. Scantly clad women, bad jokes and various incarnations of human depravity involving livestock or pudding all come to mind.

But the set of *Decoys: Rebirth* was different than that. It was more like watching a well-oiled machine going about its well-programmed ways.

*Rebirth*, the sequel to Matthew Hastings's *Decoys*, follows a similar premise. It's a school in the city's north end, waiting to lure them in, subdue them, then use them as gestation pods for their extraterrestrial babies.

In this incarnation directed by Jeffrey Lando, however, previous *Decoys* heroes Luke Callahan (Canuck Cory Sevier) and Constance (Kim Poirier) are joined by Sam Compton (Vancouver's

## BEHIND THE SCENES

venie Tyler Johnston)

Johnston's character is the average co-ed vying for a sweetheart as well as an education, while his roommates, being the rudimentary males that they are, come up with a game to see who can get laid the most by the end of the semester.

But something is amiss on the campus and people are starting to vanish. It's up to Sam, his friend Stephanie (Edmontonian Kailin See), and witty scientist Amanda Geisner (Dina Meyer of *Star Trek* fame), as well as Constance and Luke, to figure the mystery out and save the day. It's sort of like a *Scooby-Doo* episode with more boobies.

**THE LOCATION** An old school in the city's north end that's been transformed into a movie set, was a func-



tional filmmaking factory from top to bottom. The upper floors were relegated to the make-up and props crew,

while the filming went on in the basement. The school cafeteria, however, kept its cool '70s cafeteria feel—

except it had better food.

The basement, a cramped series of dirt floors and metal doors, seemed a perfect spot to shoot a visceral and gooey alien battle scene. However, aside from a few well-dressed corpses laying about the set, the days of grisly prosthetics and buckets of oozing brain matter are gone, replaced by actors and post-production computer effects.

The only unplanned excitement of the day took place in the line-up for lunch. While retrieving his meal, star Cory Sevier had a brief finger malfunction and dropped his hot plate of food. After scalding his hand he blurted out, "It's because I have a lot of K-Y jelly on my hands." Stopping for a second to realize what he had just said aloud to the group of onlookers he quickly added, "It's for a scene; I promise, it's for a scene!"

I didn't think it was *that* kind of movie. □

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## FILM LISTINGS

FRI, FEBRUARY 23 - THU, MARCH 1, 2006

**ALPHA DOG** Justin Timberlake, Emile Hirsch and Sharon Stone star in *The Notebook* director Nick Cassavetes's film based on the life of drug dealer Jesse James Hollywood, who became the youngest man ever on the FBI's most-wanted list.

**BALLET'S RUSSES** Irina Baronova, Yvonne Chouteau and Frederic Franklin appear in *Now and Then: From Frosh to Seniors* directors Daniel Geller and Dayna Goldfine's documentary about the pioneers who gave birth to modern ballet. Read Brian Gibson's review on page 27. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri - Mon, Feb 24 - 27 (7 pm)

**THE DEVIL'S MINER** Documentary filmmakers Kief Davidson and Richard Ladkani tell the story of two Bolivian children who mine for silver to support their fatherless family. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Thu, Feb 23 (7 pm)

**DOOGAL** The voices of Jimmy Fallon, Whoopie Goldberg and William H. Macy star in first-time director Butch Hartman's film about four unlikely heroes who band together to save the world from an evildoer who wants to freeze Earth forever. Read Trent Wilkie's review on page 28.

**HARLAN COUNTY, USA** This 1976 Oscar Award-winning documentary by *Havoc* director Barbara Kopple follows the bitter union strike in a Kentucky town that lasted for over a year and resulted in violent battles between the two sides. Read Josef Braun's article on page 27. Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri - Mon, Feb 24 - 27 (9 pm)

**MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION** Lynn Whitfield, Blair Underwood and Maya Angelou star in *Diary of a Mad Black Woman* writer Tyler Perry's comedy about a pistol-packing Southern matriarch who has to deal with many a family emergency while planning a reunion. Read Josef Braun's review on page 27.

**RUNNING SCARED** Paul Walker, Cameron Bright and Chazz Palminteri star in *The Cooler* director Wayne Kramer's film about a low-level mob flunkie who accidentally lets a gun used in a cop shooting back out onto the black market. Read Tyson Kaban's review on page 31.

**SPYMPATE** Chris Potter, Richard Kind and Emma Roberts star in *MVP: Most Valuable Primate* director Robert Vince's film about a highly trained spy chimp who must rescue his ex-partner's daughter and save the world's energy supply from an evil doctor. Read Sonya Solo's review on page 29.

**ULTRAVIOLET** Milla Jovovich, Cameron Bright and Nick Chinlund star in *Equilibrium* director Kurt Wimmer's sci-fi film about a civil war between humans and genetically-diseased, vampire-like hemophages.

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre for confirmation.

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THE RINGER (PG, crude content) Sat Sun Thu 11:25 Daily 1:55 4:40 7:10 9:25 Fri Sat late show 11:50

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE (G) Sat Sun Thu 11:00 Daily 1:45 4:30 7:20 9:55 Fri Sat late show 12:30 Kids Cabin Fever for Mar 2: 1:45

HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE: THE IMAX EXPERIENCE (PG, frightening scenes, not recommended for young children) Sat Sun Thu 11:45 Daily 3:10

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JUST FRIENDS (14A) Sat Sun Thu 11:40 Daily 2:10 4:25 7:35 10:05 Fri Sat late show 12:30

YOURS, MINE AND OURS (G) Sat Sun Thu 11:30 Daily 1:50 4:20 7:20 9:20 Fri Sat late show 11:30

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CHICKEN LITTLE (G) Sat Sun Thu 11:10 Daily 1:10 3:10 5:05 7:15 9:20 Fri Sat late show 11:20

RUMOR HAS IT (PG, not recommended for young children, mature themes) Sat Sun Thu 11:20 Daily 1:50 4:55 7:30 9:45 Fri Sat late show 11:45

KISS KISS BANG BANG (14A, violence, coarse language throughout) Sat Sun Thu 11:15 Daily 1:40 4:35 7:10 9:55 Fri Sat late show 12:00

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YOURS, MINE AND OURS (G) Sat Sun 11:35 Daily 2:05 4:45 7:25 9:25 Fri Sat late show 11:25

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BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content, DTS Digital) Sat 12:30 3:40 6:40 9:45 (Dolby Stereo Digital) Fri-Sat Mon-Thu 12:30 3:40 6:40 9:45

THE MATADOR (14A, coarse language, sexual content) Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 12:00 2:20 4:40 7:20

WALK THE LINE (PG, mature theme, not recommended for young children) DTS Digital Daily 12:20 3:20 6:30 9:10

MATCH POINT (14A, mature themes) DTS Digital Daily 1:20 4:10 6:55

FINAL DESTINATION 3 (18A, gory scenes) Dolby Stereo Digital Daily 8:55

THE PINK PANTHER (PG, Dolby Stereo, Digital) Daily 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:50

FIREWALL (14A, DTS Digital) Daily 1:10 4:20 6:50 9:30

IMAGINE ME AND YOU (14A, DTS Digital) Daily 8:40

FREEDOMLAND (14A, coarse language, mature themes) DTS Digital Daily 12:50 3:50 7:30 10:10

RUNNING SCARED (STC, Dolby Stereo Digital) Daily 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

MADEA'S FAMILY REUNION (PG, mature theme, DTS Digital) Daily 12:40 3:30 7:40 10:15

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THE PINK PANTHER (PG, digital) Daily 12:15 2:40 5:15 7:15

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content) Daily 8:45

EIGHT BELOW (PG) Daily 1:15 3:50 6:30 8:50

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WALK THE LINE (PG, mature theme, not recommended for young children) Fri-Sun 12:50 3:50 6:45 9:35 Mon-Thu 3:50 6:45 9:35

DOOGAL (G) Fri-Sun 12:40 2:40 4:40 7:40 Mon-Thu 4:40 7:40

FINAL DESTINATION 3 (18A, gory scenes) Daily 9:45

CURIOUS GEORGE (G) Fri-Sun 1:10 3:40 6:50 Mon-Thu

UNDERWORLD: EVOLUTION (18A, gory violence) Daily 9:00

FIREWALL (14A) Daily 8:55 9:15 Sat-Sun 1:55

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature themes, sexual content) Daily 9:45

CURIOS GEORGE (G) Sat-Sun 1:55 3:45 6:45 9:30

WALK THE LINE (PG, mature theme, not recommended for young children, digital) Daily 9:15

CURIOS GEORGE (G, digital) Daily 12:00 2:15 4:30 6:30

FIREWALL (14A, digital) Daily 1:15 3:45 6:45 9:30

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FIREWALL (14A, digital) Daily 1:15 3:45 6:45 9:30

BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature theme, sexual content, digital) Daily 1:15 3:45 6:45 9:30

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BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN (14A, mature theme, sexual content, digital) Daily 1:15 3:45 6:45 9:30

CURIOS GEORGE (G) Sat-Sun 1:5



SOFT & SWEET  
102.3FM - 104.5FM

102.3FM - 104.5FM

102.3FM - 104.5FM  
102.3FM - 104.5FM  
102.3FM - 104.5FM  
102.3FM - 104.5FM

VUEWEEKLY

# MUSIC

DRIVE BY PUNCH / 36

OPERA

PRO CORD / 42

ARTS

DISTANT REPLAY / 47

ENTERTAINMENT



## controller.controller takes control of image

INDIE 'IT' BAND SPILLS ABOUT SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SNOWSTORMS

BRYAN CARROLL / bryan@vneweekly.com

The music industry, not to mention the whole world, is obsessed with image. In reaction, the kids of Toronto's controller.controller do their best to present merely their music and not a contrived version of themselves to their audiences.

"We didn't set out to be a certain way," explains guitarist Scott Kaija, speaking to *Vue* post-sound check that we did shy away from focusing

PREVIEW

WED, MAR 1 (8 PM)  
**CONTROLLER.CONTROLLER**  
WITH YOU SAY PARTY! WE SAY DÉJÀ, BOLIDE  
STARLITE ROOM, \$16

on individual personalities."

When I mentioned that this reluctance is a fresh take, especially for a band fronted by a female, Kaija told me, "We always looked at our band as a whole, not a singer and a backup band"—and while it is inevitable that sometimes they'll be seen that way,

they try to minimize the viewpoint by refusing to exploit the gender of singer Nirmala Basnayake.

"We play with limited lighting and try to de-emphasize the band as a spectacle, to focus instead on the music," Kaija explains. "We see Nirmala as an instrument. With some other bands I think a lot of it is just their record labels exploiting female sexuality."

CONTINUATION PAGE 45

## Make Lisa Lashes this one promise: no surprise gifts of illicit drugs

SHEENA ROSSITER / sheena@vneweekly.com

**L**ISA LASHES, the DJ Queen of Hard House who last played E-town in November 2005. "I like that people remember me, and get excited when I return."

Of course, the fact that world-class DJs don't tend to come to Edmonton with much regularity doesn't hurt that excitement level, a reality that isn't lost on Lashes.

"I don't like to come too often—I want to try and keep people in suspense," she laughs. "I like to pull people into the clubs, and if people know that I'll be back in a month then they

This Friday's engagement at Cowboy's will be one of a handful of times that Lashes, the first female to be

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (8 PM)  
**USA LASHES**  
WITH GRIFFEN, BIG DADDY  
COWBOYS, \$20

ranked in the top 10 of the world's best DJs, has been to Edmonton, and she tours globally almost constantly.

But her enthusiasm for travel has been dampened recently by a sour experience in New Zealand, where an over-zealous fan secretly slipped her a birthday card containing two ecstasy pills which were discovered by customs officials. An understanding judge let her off with a warning, but Lashes is now searched on a regular basis when touring.

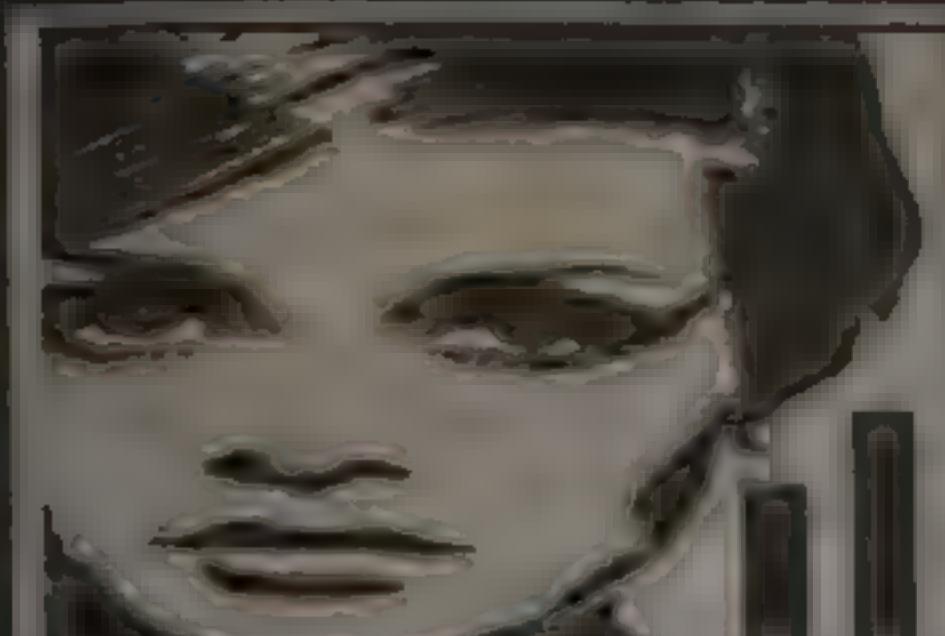
"It was a bit of a twisted compliment," she says of the incident, "but

thankfully it didn't affect my personal life."

Despite the shock factor of the New Zealand ecstasy incident, however, Lashes's outlook on her fans hasn't changed much. "I love chatting with people before the show," she says. "I'm a sociable person."

Edmonton fans will get to chat with the DJ diva Lashes this Friday, but not before enjoying a planned three-hour set. "The set will begin with break beats and have a build up to hard house," Lashes reveals. "The set is more designed to be a build up rather than full throttled."

Since excitement among Lashes's Edmonton fans has been percolating since last November, however, the build-up has really already happened. ▶



**SO & SO**  
CONCERTS

and New City Proudly Present...

Friday Feb. 24  
Our Mercury  
Wednesday Night Heroes  
City Streets tour kickoff

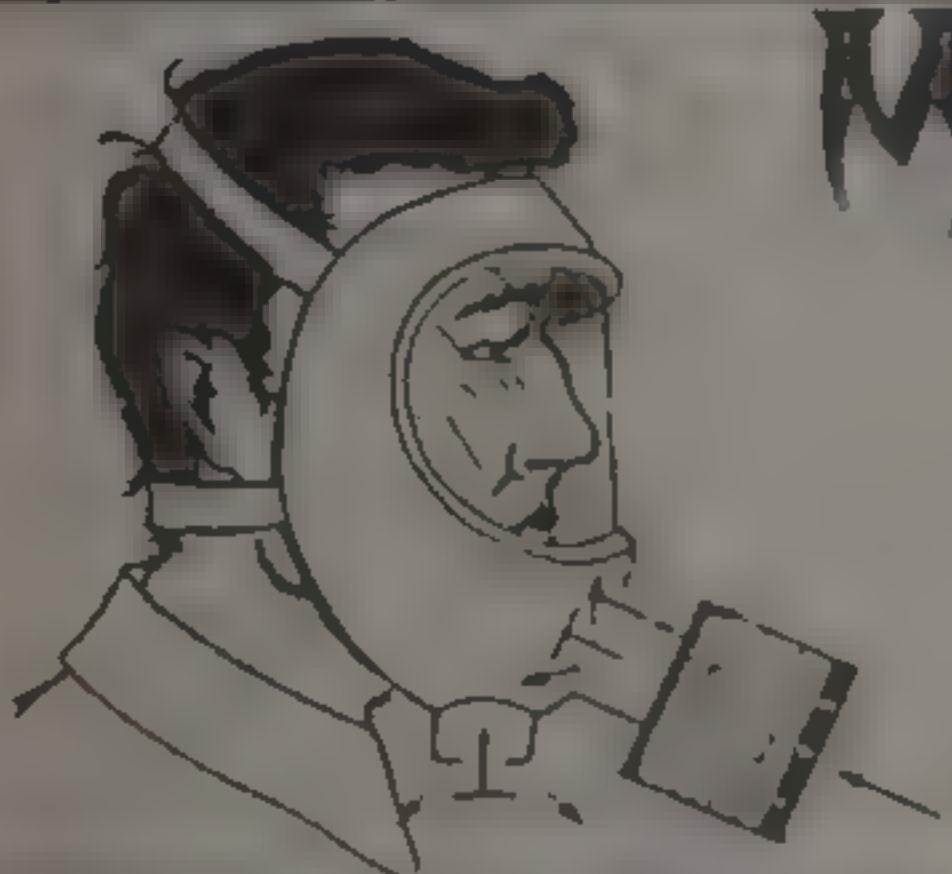
**Our Mercury**  
CD release on smallman records  
Wednesday Night Heroes  
City Streets



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for reals yo!**

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& ROCKABILLY**  
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CUSTOMER APPRECIATION PARTY  
PRIZES FOR COSTUMES @ MIDNIGHT  
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**Das DOntz**  
**DJ dervish**  
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**March 10, 2006**  
**Tricky Woo**  
**Illuminati**  
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**BIG JOHN BATES**  
voodoo  
dolls

**Tricky Woo** Fri  
Mar 10

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WITH DRIVE BY PUNCH,  
FIELDSTOFLOOD,  
AND THE FAILURE

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WITH ROCKETFACE

MARCH 2

HEDLEY WITH  
MAXPK

MARCH 8

OPETIL  
MARCH 8

ASIA  
MARCH 22

NO DODGER WITH LUCKER

APRIL 28

WEST EDMONTON MALL 481.6420

WWW.REDS.AB.CA

# Face punching-in was a bad start to a good album

DRIVE BY PUNCH TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY ON *A GOOD START TO A BAD DAY*

MIKE LAROCQUE / michael@vnewswEEKLY.com

A full-length album is a sacred thing for a band, standing not only as a shiny, foil-wrapped trophy of their musical prowess but also removing them from the over-

generalized status of bands that release a couple of EPs before vanishing into the depths of the local music-scene's "Where are they now?" category.

For Edmonton's Drive By Punch, it seemed that latter fate was drawing nearer as their long-awaited LP—finally released at the end of 2005—faced a frustrating array of delays and complications.

"Yeah, we ran into a couple of hardships with the album," laughs front-man Lonnie Artokivi. "Everything from our producer getting his head punched-in in Kelowna and having to get reconstructive surgery, to errors that we made as a band on the best tracks. When we showed our producer what we had, he didn't really like what we'd created, so we recorded a couple more times, he flew here, we drove there, and we finally got it done."

But with *A Good Start to a Bad Day*

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (6 PM)

DRIVE BY PUNCH

FIELDSTOFLOOD, THE FAILURE

REO'S, \$17.50

being Drive By Punch's first full-length LP, there was still nervous apprehension when the band finally laid their hands on the finished product. When Artokivi and band-mates Rob Cole, Brady Coate, Chris Ruddy and Shawn Kilgrain listened to the finalized tracks that would be making up their first album, their testament of the band's accomplishments to date, they weren't, in fact, pleased at all—at least not at first.

"Once we had the masters back, me and a couple of guys were listening to them and we weren't happy with it. We just felt like, wow, we had done all this work and I personally didn't like what was going on with the tracks. But then I started listening to it again I was just like, 'Sweet. I don't know what I was thinking.' My initial reaction was that it wasn't a fair representation of how much work we put



into making it, but in the end I think it turned out for the best."

**THE ALBUM, RELEASED** in late November, seems to have allayed the band's initial fears. The 14-track LP is filled with the same raucous, layered tracks featuring multiple-part harmonies that have made the band fan favourites around town, and will only benefit by what Artokivi calls a

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

THE NEW  
EDMONTON  
WIND  
SINFONIA

ON STAGE AND SCREEN

Convocation Hall, U of A Campus  
March 2, 2006, 7:30pm  
Website: [www.n-e-w-s.ca](http://www.n-e-w-s.ca)

## ON Stage and Screen

Mark your calendar for Thursday, March 2, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. The second concert of the NEWS season promises to fill Convocation Hall at the University of Alberta with the glorious melodies made memorable in Hollywood and on Broadway - featuring selections from *Star Wars*, *West Side Story*, *South Pacific*, and more!

Tickets are only \$15 for adults and \$10 for students and seniors (60+), and are available in advance at TIX on the Square, plus applicable service fees, and at the door on the night of performance.

The NEWS offers more than just the finest of wind ensemble music available to Edmonton audiences. The company is dedicated to creating the kind of high quality, accessible entertainment experiences that will bring music fans back for more.

VUEWEEKLY

# Open the garage door and let out The Horses

BRYAN CARROLL / bryan@vneweekly.com

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then rock 'n' roll must be some sort of all-day flatterfest.

The local garage rock upstarts The Horses are no different: their very name is inspired by Chicago rockers The Ponys.

"The Ponys is such a sweet name, so I said, 'let's be The Horses,'" explains drummer Rene Wilson, "but I'm scared The Ponys will show up and say 'you guys stole our name, kinda.'"

Wilson, who plays in two other local garage-influenced groups (The SubAtomics and The Mixed Signals), is at a loss to explain Edmonton's recent youth-fuelled garage rock explosion. In fact, he's not even sure

PREVIEW

SAT, FEB 25 (7 PM)  
**THE HORSES**  
WITH MICHAEL RAULT & THE MIXED SIGNALS  
THE SOUTH SIDE RIOTS, LET'S DANCE, JOEL &  
THE LAST OF THE NEIGHBOURS  
RIVERDALE HALL, \$8

it ought to be called an explosion.

"Where I go to school, no one knows what garage rock is at all," he laments. "No one listens to any music, not even that emo post-hardcore stuff or whatever."

For Wilson, however, garage rock for comes naturally. "[Mixed Signals frontman] Mike Rault and I are related—our dads are cousins," he explains. "Garage rock is in our blood."

But Wilson is not interested solely in noisy, lo-fi rock; he's excited about the entire scene we've got brewing right here in the River City.

"I'm really in favour of big things happening in Edmonton in the near future—that'd be really exciting," he enthuses. "Edmonton's got what it takes to be a place like Montreal. Maybe it's a little smaller, a little more remote, but it's got what it takes."

For now, though, Wilson is simply excited about The Horses upcoming show, which will be their first ever, kinda. "We played at a kid's birthday party right before Christmas, but it was invite only, you know?" he explains. "This will be our first real show." □

## For Drive By Punch, new formats put rad back into radio

BY BRYAN CARROLL / PREVIOUS PAGE

change in the radio landscape.

With stations like Sonic 102.9 playing more local music (Drive By Punch was the station's Band of the Month last July), promoting home-grown music has gotten at least one step easier.

"If one station starts changing their format to play local music normally instead of just on Sunday night after 11, then that will become the standard across the board," says Artokivi.

"At our show [as Band of the Month] we asked how many people there hadn't seen us before, and more than half of the room hadn't seen us previously—they hadn't heard us before Sonic started playing us. I was walking around the room and didn't recognize any of the people, which was sweet because we had, like, 400 people at a show and half of them are new fans."

So it seems that between the difficulties of getting their record out and the boosts they've gotten on the local scene, Drive By Punch has managed to strike even their musical karma.

With plans to tour over the summer and play Toronto's North by Northeast music festival this June, the band is enjoying the buzz of having not only having boxes of records in their apartments, but also of reaching the point where a one-time garage band gains local recognition.

"It was never like we expected to be at a certain point at a certain time," says Artokivi. "We just kept playing and stayed focused on rehearsals and writing, and it all just sort of happened on its own. Every time a kid tells you that they drove in from Vegreville or Calgary to see you're show, that's really cool. It's overwhelming." □

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Wednesday Night Heroes City Streets tour kickoff

Friday Feb 24 Our Mercury CD release on smallman records  
Wednesday Night Heroes City Streets

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FIRST NIGHT FOR TRASHTRIATHURSDAYS  
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\$2.00 HIGHBALLS AND DOMESTICS TIL 12

March 10 Tricky Woo Illuminati Big John Bates

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# MUSIC WEEKLY

# 91.1 THE BOUNCE

## BOUNCE 36

- 1 - NE-YO - SO SICK
- 2 - ALL AMERICAN REJECTS - DIRTY LITTLE SECRET
- 3 - CASCADA - EVERYTIME WE TOUCH
- 4 - BLACK EYED PEAS - PUMP IT
- 5 - NELLY - GRILLZ
- 6 - RAY - J/ FABOLOUS - ONE WISH
- 7 - SEAN PAUL - TEMPERATURE
- 8 - NEILSSA O'NEIL - LET IT GO
- 9 - RELIENT K - WHO I AM HATES WHO I'VE BEEN
- 10 - JUELZ SANTANA - THERE IT GO (THE WHISTLE SONG)
- 11 - KESHIA CHANTE - RING THE ALARM
- 12 - MADONNA - SORRY
- 13 - BEYONCE/ SLIM THUG - CHECK ON IT
- 14 - GWEN STEFANI - CRASH
- 15 - THE SHOW - WATCHIN' ME
- 16 - MARY J BLIGE - BE WITHOUT YOU
- 17 - KANYE WEST - TOUCH THE SKY
- 18 - MARIAH CAREY - DON'T FORGET ABOUT US
- 19 - KELLY CLARKSON - WALK AWAY
- 20 - JAMIE FOXX/ LUDACRIS - UNPREDICTABLE
- 21 - EMINEM/ NATE DOGG - SHAKE THAT
- 22 - THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS - BEEP
- 23 - KREESHA TURNER - BOUNCE WITH ME
- 24 - NICKELBACK - SAVIN ME
- 25 - PINK - STUPID GIRLS
- 26 - ANDRES - LOVE YOU RIGHT
- 27 - THREE 6 MAFIA - STAY FLY
- 28 - CHRISTINA MILIAN - SAY I
- 29 - EMINEM - WHEN I'M GONE
- 30 - CHRIS BROWN - RUN IT
- 31 - RIHANNA - S.O.S.
- 32 - DRYAN ADAMS VS. PASCAL - RUN TO YOU
- 33 - SHAWN DESMAN - MAN IN ME
- 34 - THE PUSSYCAT DOLLS - STICKIWITCHU
- 35 - CARL HENRY - LITTLE MAMA
- 36 - KELLY CLARKSON - BECAUSE OF YOU (REMIX)

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Jimmy Whitten

BACKDRAUGHT PUB Open stage

BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ Jesh de Rox, 7pm, donations

CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB Open stage hosted by Alberta Claude 6-10pm

DUSTER'S PUB Jam hosted by

GRINDER Thursday jam night

JAMMERS PUB Thursday open jam, 7-11pm

J AND R BAR AND GRILL Open stage with The Poster Boys (pop/rock/blues); 8:30pm-11pm

J.J.'S Showcase Jam hosted by the Dr. Oxide Band, 9pm-1am

JULIAN'S PIANO BAR Graham's Twisted Jazz Standards, 7:30-10:30pm

KINGSKNIGHT PUB Greedy Bastard Thursday Nights Face First, F'N' It, 9:30pm

NEST Open stage with Nick Zyla every Thu

RED STATION (formerly From the Ground Up, OK Cadet, guests, all ages event, 6:30pm

SHIRTLESS CAFE (formerly the Womvers), The Dean Bryan Band, Ryan Waye, Mike Angus (of The Wheat Pool), 8pm, \$8 (door)

STARLITE ROOM

THEATRE

The image is a black and white photograph of a concert poster. At the top, it says 'THE URBAN LOUNGE' with 'WWW.URBANLOUNGE.NET' and 'EDMONTON'S BEST LIVE VENUE' below it. It also lists the address '8111-105ST' and phone number '438-3388'. The main title 'OUR MERCURY' is in large, bold, block letters. Below it, 'RATT POISON' is also in large, bold, block letters. To the right, there is a logo for 'SONIC 102.9 MODERN ROCK'. The background of the poster is a grainy, out-of-focus photograph of a person's face and a guitar.

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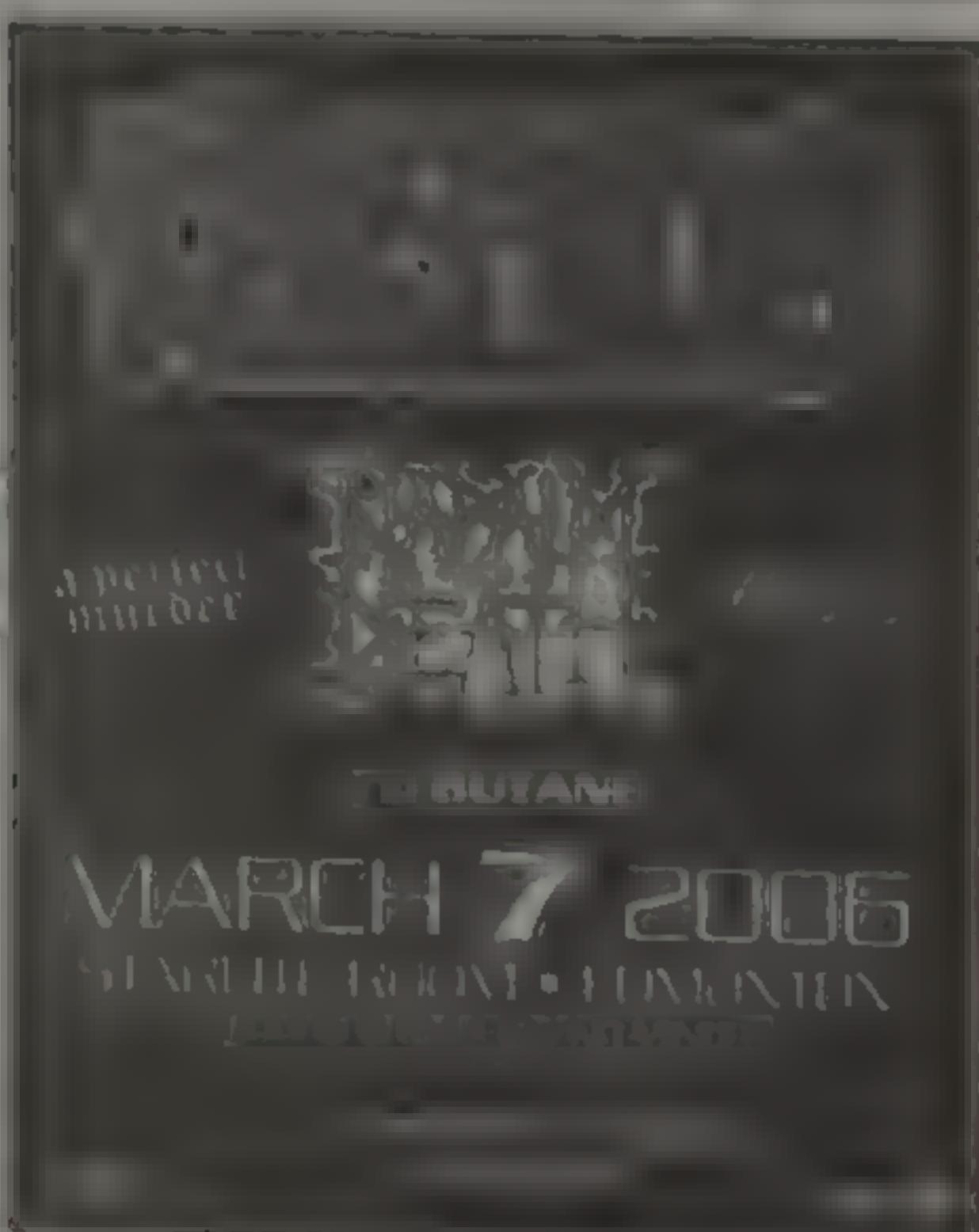
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→ 2006 ←

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CONTROLLER  
CONTROLLER

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MEGATUNES

**action**  
**action**  
WITH GUESTS  
SOMETHING FOR ROCKETS  
& TO THE TEETH/TO THE HILT

**MARCH 2**  
**STARLITE ROOM**  
ALL AGES - EARLY SHOW - DOORS 6PM  
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with Junior Bloomsday

**MARCH 4 2006**  
**STARLITE ROOM**  
EDMONTON AB  
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MEGATUNES  
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**MARCH 8**  
**RED'S**  
DOORS 7PM  
ALL AGES  
TICKETS:  
UNIONEVENTS.COM  
TICKETMASTER.CA  
MEGATUNES  
BLACKBYRD  
FSW, WEM & RED'S

**peach**

**DevilDriver** dark tranquillity

# Doug Riley, master of the Hammond B3, returns to Yardbird

Doug Riley has played his Hammond B3 organ on a lot of recordings over the years. He was the man on three of Bob Seger's most famous albums (including *Night Moves*) and has lent his skills to recordings by Ray Charles, Ringo Starr and Gordon Lightfoot, among

For 20 years Riley made a living through recording and writing songs, but somewhere around 1990 he realized that he was missing out on the thing he most enjoyed: playing live in front of audiences.

While he didn't abandon recording completely, Riley did start turning down more sessions in favor of getting out in front of audiences. Some of the crowds were gathered for performances by Michael Burgess, with Riley acting as musical director for shows heavy on theatrical numbers, but his true love becomes apparent when he talks about playing with his Hammond B3 jazz quartet.

"It swings and it's very free," Riley explains. "There's lots of room to improvise, so every night is different. It's exciting because there's that sense of not knowing what's going to happen. It's not over-rehearsed because it's not rehearsed at all; we'll just go up and play."

**IT'S NOT LIKE RILEY** and his group are having an all-out free-for-all, though. Despite having plenty of opportunities to take the spotlight, each musi-

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 AND SAT, FEB 25 (8 PM)  
**DOUG RILEY**  
YARDBIRD SUITE, \$18 - \$22

cian is ultimately out to serve the song. "One person will start something off and we'll develop it all together," Riley remarks. "The main thing is listening to what the others are doing so that what you do fits in and nothing overpowers anyone else."

While he's picked out a number of possible songs for the group to play, Riley admits that he'll only make the final decision as to what they'll do just before they step onto the stage.

"There's a tension involved with just going up there and then saying 'OK, we're going to do this,'" he says. "I have charts that I've sketched out for us to follow, but they're just lead sheets for the guys to follow so we have some kind of form to blow on."

"I like it to be exciting like that," Riley exclaims. "Any other way is just too predictable, and I like to put tension onto everybody because I know they're all capable. I know they'll all respond."

"The three guys that I'm playing with are all brilliant musicians in their own right and I'm expecting to have a lot of fun for the two nights there," he continues. "We should definitely get out there into space." □

## Dust Poets spread out

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vneweekly.com

Most groups simply replace members as they move away, but The Dust Poets have found a way to overcome the logistical difficulties. The five Dust Poets started out together in Brandon, Manitoba, but three of them now call Toronto home, while mandolin player Corey Ticknor lives on the banks of the Bay of Fundy in New Brunswick.

"It makes it hard to rehearse," Ticknor admits, "but we played together so much back when we lived in Brandon that we got really tight and now we just throw a few days on the front of the tour to get together and rehearse and it all comes back really quick."

While it's not so difficult to get together for a few rehearsals, the recording process seems like it might be a little more complicated, but Ticknor says that there are advantages to being spread out across the country as well.

"It makes it a longer process, because we're not in each other's space as often, or for as long as we'd like," he says. "But at the same time it makes us really focus when we do get together."

Ticknor says that the group's rural outlook has been tempered with a lament for a landscape that is increasingly buried beneath a suburban sprawl of box stores.

"The theme of the album [the new *Lovesick Town*] is I really love my home town and I really hate my home town," he laughs, "and I really have to get out some times." □

PREVIEW

FRI, FEB 24 (8 PM)  
**DUST POETS**  
WITH JOEL FAFARD  
FULL MOON FOLK CLUB, \$17



1. **Grillz**  
Nelly
2. **Check On It (Intro f. Slim Thug)**  
Beyoncé
3. **Gold Digger**  
Kanye West
4. **My Humps**  
Black Eyed Peas
5. **Thunderstruck**  
AC/DC
6. **Welcome 2 Detroit**  
Trick Trick
7. **We Be Burnin'**  
Sean Paul
8. **Don't Forget About Us**  
Mariah Carey
9. **Candy Shop**  
50 Cent
10. **Because I Got High**  
Afroman

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SHOUT OUT OUT OUT OUT  
with TWIN FANGS and EVE COURNOYER  
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with THE MINIATURES and FAT DAVE CRIME WAVE  
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MUSIC LISTEN RECORDS, MEGATUNES, 10 OF A INFO DESKS  
AND THE POWER PLANT

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ARTS AND CRAFTS RECORDING ARTIST  
JASON COLLETT  
with PASOMINO  
ADVANCE TICKETS \$10.00 AND DAY OF SHOW \$12.00  
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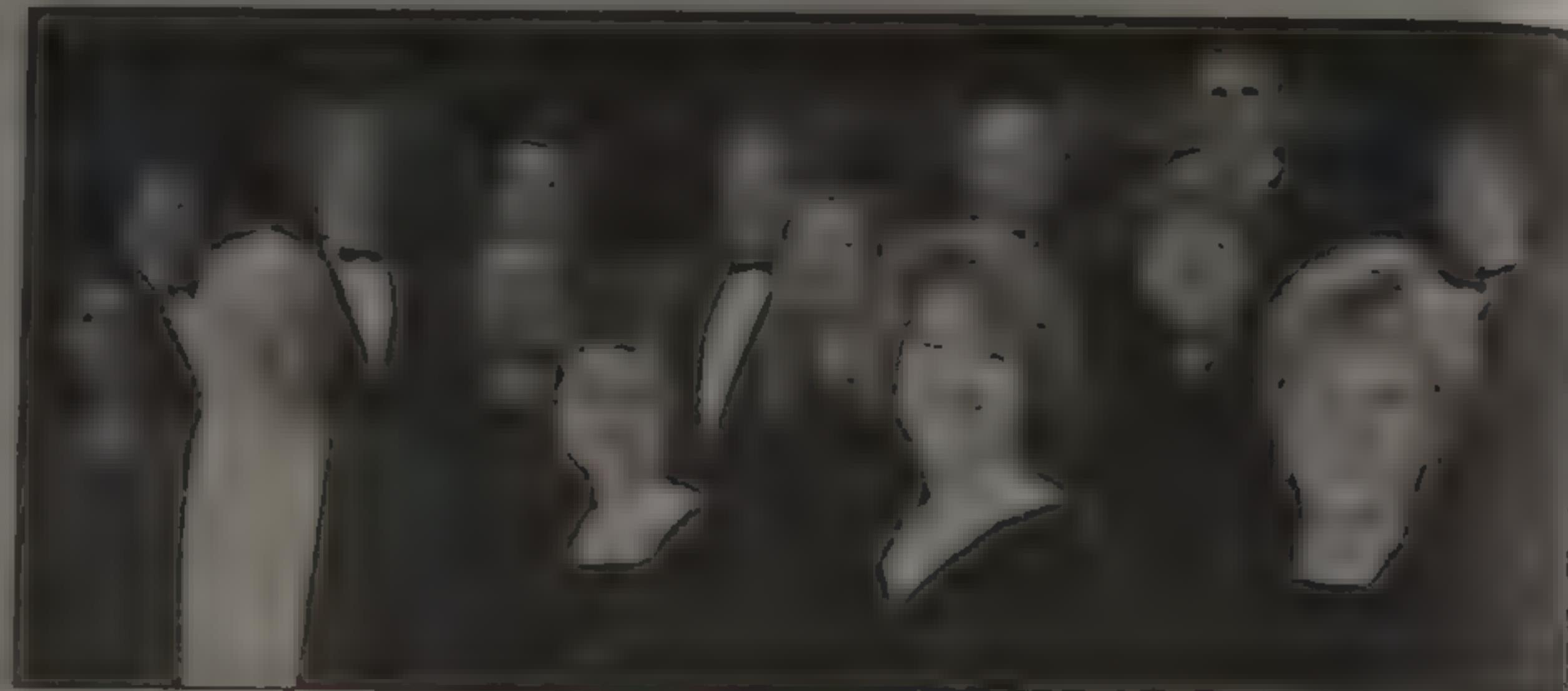
If five band members is good, 29 must be better—so goes the logic of McDades/Pro Coro team-up

SARAH CHAN / [sarah@vnewweekly.com](mailto:sarah@vnewweekly.com)

Pro Coro Canada is ready to get in touch with the choir's lighter, collaborative side with this weekend's performance with Canadian roots sensation The McDades, an eclectic and talented folk group made up of three Edmontonian siblings and two musicians from Montreal

After The McDades and Pro Coro had the chance to perform separately at the Winspear last year for the Rotary International Centennial Gala, they realized there was the potential for collaboration

According to Pro Coro associate conductor Trent Worthington, when the



two groups sat down to discuss an approach to the concert, there was a point where they all questioned

whether or not such a pairing would really work—a doubt that vanished once they began exchanging ideas

Worthington's excitement for The McDades' music and talent is all too evident as he enthuses about their live performance. "When The McDades put their musical brains to it, they can make quite unbelievable things happen to a typical folk song," he explains.

"What the band does musically with a melody is approached like a

PREVIEW | SUN, FEB 26 (2 PM)  
PRO CORO, THE McDADES  
WITH CONDUCTOR TRENT WORTHINGTON  
FRANCIS WINEPEAR CENTRE FOR MUSIC, \$25-\$39

jazz ensemble would grab a melody and manipulate and improvise it. The construction that happens on the spot is just amazing. They never do the exact same thing twice—it's always a fresh approach."

Most of the pieces at the concert will be the McDades' original songs, which they are accustomed to performing live. Many of the favourites, however, have been re-thought and rearranged for the addition of choir

Pairing a choir with a band of this kind is highly uncommon, Worthington says, with the fusion of classical choral influences in what is otherwise purely folk Celtic with an acoustic type of jazz influence.

With both groups lending their own valuable elements to the musical process, Sunday's duo performance is sure to be a hit. "We're practicing furiously and madly," Worthington admits, noting that his choir definitely welcomes the challenge. "Musicians enjoy a chance to try new things."

The collaboration will offer the chance for Pro Coro to sing choral music that is quite a departure from normal circumstances, but Edmonton's professional choir is up for the exciting challenge. And Edmontonians are in for a collaborative treat. ▀

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# Betty Machete cuts like a knife

EDEN MUNRO / [eden@vneweekly.com](mailto:eden@vneweekly.com)

**B**etty Machete is only four months old, but the band is already pushing their musical boundaries, conjuring up a jazzy, surf and indie-rock sound awash with energetic musical changeups.

Keyboardist Jet Vee says that the varying dynamics in the songs are intentional. "We're trying to do something a little more complex than the bands we've been in in the past," she says. "I get kind of bored of playing straight, so I like to throw in a bit of syncopation, mix things up."

While Vee has a definite vision for the band, the sound is also partly due to an organic combination of influences, with the banding from a folk-rock background and singer/guitarist Kelsey Thomson originally being a heavy-metal guy.

"I guess this is the happy medium," laughs Vee.

Despite any musical differences, the band is bonded by a love for playing live, something that carries over into the recording process. "We don't want to let anybody down with an empty sound," says Vee. "So we just figure out what we're doing and lay it down pretty honestly."

Before they can hit the stage regularly, though, the band still needs to recruit a full-time drummer. They have some temporary help lined up, but they've been plagued by bad luck when it comes to filling the spot permanently.

"We've gone through 10 drummers now," Vee says, the frustration clear. "We go through them like Kleenex. We had a couple guys who just wandered off and a few that hated us."

"Originally Kelsey was going to be the drummer," she remembers. "But we were writing the songs and he was singing them and I was like, 'dude, you have to be on guitar and vocals. You're not allowed to be the drummer.' Which is unfortunate, because otherwise we'd have a drummer."

PREVIEW  
SAT, FEB 26  
**BETTY MACHETE**  
WITH GIVE BY ME, ORCHID

[www.vneweekly.com](http://www.vneweekly.com)

REVUE / WED, FEB 15 / MIKEY DREAD / SIDETRACK CAFÉ

Famed radio DJ and international champion of reggae Mikey Dread was in town last Wednesday to play the Sidetrack Café's 25th birthday celebration. Following Edmonton's perpetually tight reggae favorites Souljah Fyah, Dread's horn section proceeded to blow the roof off the soon-to-be-demolished Sidetrack. The no-smoking bylaw was quickly forgotten: it was hard to spot the source, but as the band took the stage more than a puff of marijuana smoke could be whiffed. Olfactory stimulation aside, the perfectly paced, slow skankin' Rhythms of Dread band provided the authentic Jamaican experience—dancing the night away in a tight, hot little room. —IRALEIGH ANDERSON / [ira@vneweekly.com](mailto:ira@vneweekly.com)



Photo: Henry Munro

saturday february 25, 2006

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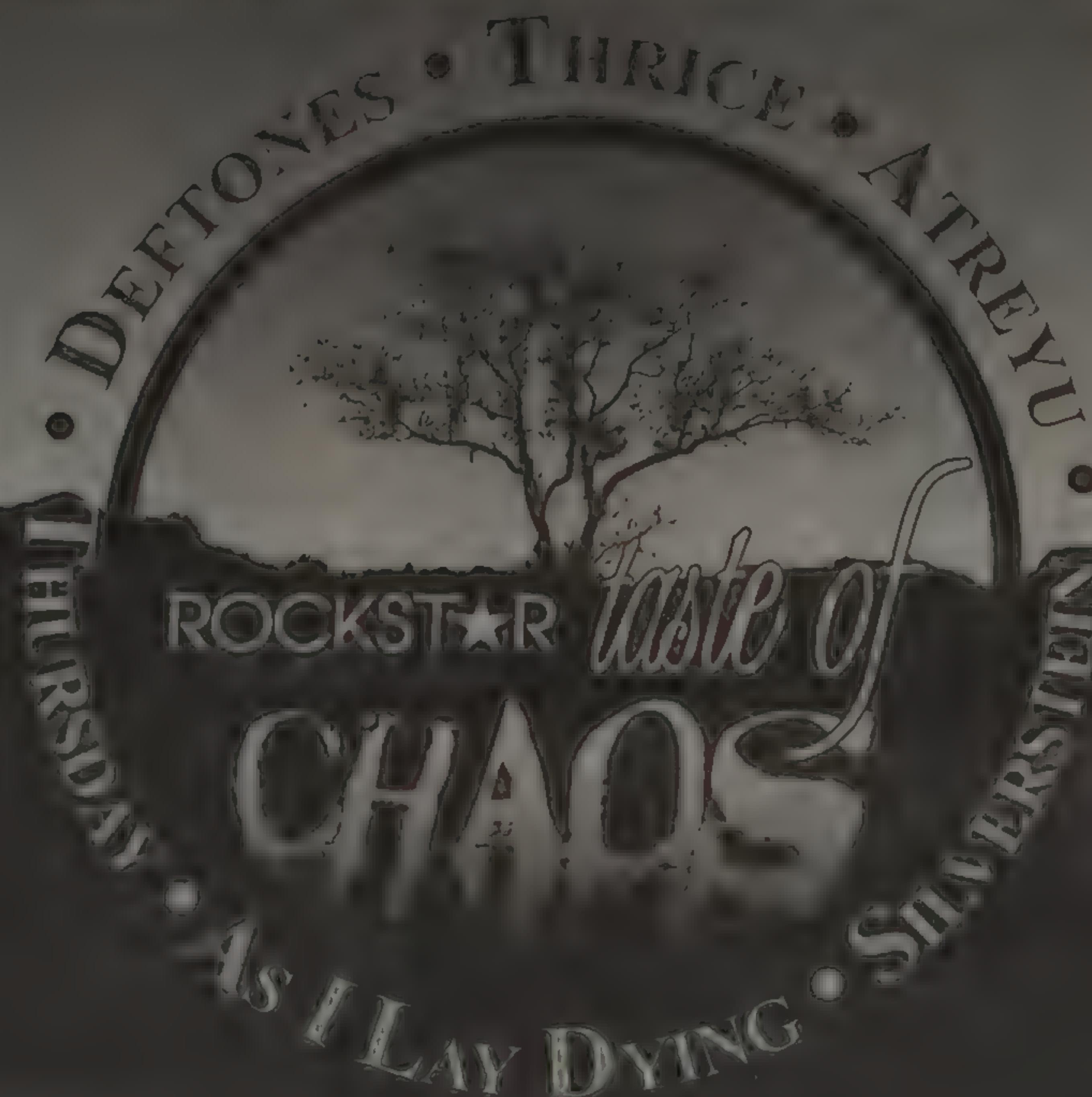
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# This is just how we roll

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 34

**THIS IS WHY** Kaija and the rest of controller.controller are so happy to have released their new disc *X-Amounts*, as well as their previous release *History*, on smaller indie label Paper Bag Records. "The nice thing about a small label," says Kaija, "is they're content to let us do our own thing."

And controller.controller has been doing their own thing quite a bit lately. Quebec City was the last night of the eastern leg of their current tour, after which they'll have a week off before beginning the western part of their tour, with forays into the western United States before hitting Texas for the SXSW festival in March. Oh, and if that wasn't enough, they're off to England soon after.

Not surprisingly, Kaija is looking forward to the break. "I'm sick as a

dog," he says before a coughing fit leads me to ask if he'll be confined to bed rest for the whole week. "We're shooting a video actually, so it's not even really a break."

Kaija is not complaining, however. The band was recently nominated for an Independent Music Award, in the favourite group category, and their live shows continue to do well. "The reception everywhere is really good. We ended up playing a show right in the middle of that huge blizzard the east coast just had and we still sold out the club. It's all really exciting."

So controller.controller have no plans of stopping their merciless touring schedule anytime soon. Through sickness, sleet, and snow, Kaija doesn't see anywhere but up for the pulsing drum beats and wallop bass of their particular brand of post-punk. As he says, "This is just how we roll." ▶



**REVUE / SAT, FEB 18 / YOU SAY PARTY! WE SAY DIE! / VELVET UNDERGROUND** The world is ready for a dance-punk revolution, and bands like Vancouver's You Say Party! We Say Die! are leading the charge to the dance floor. While there's no shortage of synth-infused rock out there these days, it's bands like this who are using the fun combination to the best effect. Creating catchy and sexy tunes that hit you in the sneakers and keep rising up your legs to nestle in your crotch, the world will be powerless to resist their charms. It's time to get hot and heavy out there, boys and girls, so quit gazing at yer shoes and do something useful with them. —PHIL DUPERRON / phil@vnewweekly.com

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ALBUM REVIEWS

# NEW SOUNDS

KT TUNSTALL  
EYE TO THE TELESCOPE  
RENTLESS

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vneweekly.com

**THIS ROCKS**  
In a world where it's easy to download single songs rather than sitting down and spending the time to listen to an entire disc in the order that the artist intended, KT Tunstall's *Eye to the Telescope* is a testament to the slowly dying format of the album that begs to be taken in as whole

The opening track, "Other Side of the World," gives the impression that Tunstall just might be another female songwriter specializing in airy tunes and pretty voices. That's not a cut towards the style, and the song itself is lovely, but there's definitely a familiar sound to it

After that initial burst of pop, Tunstall eases the listener into something a little more energetic with "Another Place to Fall." The song still has a chorus that soars overhead, but the verses have a heavier, thumping rhythm

It's on the third track, however, the Tunstall really starts to let loose "Under the Weather" begins as a sweet acoustic tune, but then the music turns gritty and Tunstall's voice becomes a soul monster

There's power in those vocal chords and she can tear apart the sweetness when she goes for it, like on the percussive grooves of "Black Horse and the Cherry Tree" and "Suddenly I See." Tunstall knows when to hold back, too, never over-singing on the relaxed, piano-led "Through the

Initial impressions are turned sideways as the album develops with each song until the whole has

become something that a single song could not be

DUSTY MERCURY  
FROM BELOW  
SMALLMAN RECORDS

BRYAN CARROLL / bryan@vneweekly.com

**THIS ROCKS**  
I'll admit it: I never wanted to like Our Mercury. I'm not a bad person, nor am I totally clueless, it's just that, well, I missed Misdemeanor.

When I was a kid, they were the coolest thing around, and when they went away and came back as something different, I fell into the "we fear change" mindset and tried my best not to give it a chance.

Well, I'm here to tell you that I was wrong, and I'm so, so sorry.

*From Below*, Our Mercury's new and much anticipated record for Winnipeg's Smallman Records, is excellent. The addition of Eric Budd on keyboards was a stroke of sheer brilliance, especially the piano-versus-organ feeling on tracks such as "Shawna Don't Wanna." Don't get the impression that Our Mercury has become some sort of wussy piano band all of a sudden, though: there's still plenty of Clash-style rocking to be found on this disc, too

So while some days I might still yearn for some of the more humourous sentiments of Misdemeanor's juvenilism (penis, penis, yeah!), I'll have to admit to myself that Our Mercury's more sophisticated and mature sound far outpaces it. This record is brilliant, and we should be glad they came back home to Edmonton to help us create the amazing scene we've got right now, a scene they're poised to lead.

DIMITRI FROM PARIS  
IN THE HOUSE OF LOVE  
DEFECTED

MARC MORIN / marc@vneweekly.com

**THIS ROCKS**  
I am not a good dancer. I like dancing, sure, but as I look around the room when getting my groove on at a club I always see at least one person who looks like a total idiot, and I hope too god I don't look as bad as him. This is about as much as I can hope for.

This isn't a big qualm for me, as dancing doesn't make up most of my daily routine, although Dimitri From Paris's new CD makes me wish otherwise. His very upbeat and romantic take at disco is a very serious one, and a lot of the music sounds straight from the era, featuring all the back-up singers bongos, wood blocks, saxophones, and funky bass lines of a night at Studio 54

This album also doesn't spare on the quantity either, being a two disc album that includes a bonus disc along with a very sexy poster of art work actually made by Dimitri himself

*In the House of Love* is very funky, sexy, classic, and will not disappoint anyone who is looking to get his or her groove on, so go out and buy it

LIAM PRODIGY  
BACK TO MINE  
DMC

SHEENA ROSSITER / sheena@vneweekly.com

**THIS ROCKS**  
Liam Howlett, the mastermind behind mid-'90s UK electro-punk group The Prodigy, returns with *Back to Mine*, a compilation of 16 personally selected tracks that would prove to be any DJ's ultimate set.

Tracks such as "Radio Babylon" and "I Chase the Devil" will sound familiar to fans of The Prodigy, as they have been remixed by the band in the past, while the retro groove of "Livin' Thing" and "Jolene" will excite the middle-aged before sending them back to their youth.

The tracks on *Back to Mine* appear to be very schizophrenic, offering samples from hip-hop's Public Enemy to rock's Public Image Limited to The Prodigy itself to country's original glamour girl herself, Dolly Parton

But Howlett's keen ear makes all the diverse and eccentric sounds seem natural to the listener, and would keep any dance floor shaking all night long

JACK JOHNSON AND FRIENDS  
SING-A-LONGS AND LULLABIES FOR  
THE FILM CURIOUS GEORGE  
BRUUN

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vneweekly.com

**THIS IS OK**  
It's hard not to like this album a little bit. It's the soundtrack to a movie about a monkey, which is cause for

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## Bramwell Park discusses The Beatles' Abbey Road

### RETRO | DISTANT REPLAY

STEVEN SANDOR / [steven@vneweekly.com](mailto:steven@vneweekly.com)

Distant Replay has been a fixture in *Vue Weekly* for nearly a year and a half, and in that time, The Beatles' catalogue has steadily been exhausted as artists pick the albums that most influenced their careers.

But, up to this point, no one has selected *Abbey Road*, the album named for the famous London studio in which the band did most of their recording. Edmonton's own Bramwell Park got it out of the way this week. For Park, *Abbey Road* was simply inspirational.

"Well, after thinking this through, I'd have to say The Beatles' entire collection has been very influential on my career as a musician," he says. "They were so consistent, yet always reinventing themselves. They put themselves in a position that enabled them to do whatever they wanted. I have tremendous respect for those chaps. But if I had to narrow it down to just one album, I'd say *Abbey Road* has been the most influential."

"Though perhaps not my favourite Beatles album, depending on what day you ask, *Abbey Road* was one of the first albums I ever owned," he continues. "Of course, my parents raised me on a healthy dose of the Fab Four, and I could probably sing along to every song before I even knew what I was listening to. I always loved that particular album, with all its non-stop hit-after-hit, hook-after-hook brilliance."

### HAIKU! | QUICK SPINS

WHITEY AND BPLAYER  
[quickspins@vneweekly.com](mailto:quickspins@vneweekly.com)

### WILLIAM HOOKER / LEE RANALDO THE CELESTIAL ANSWER

XERIC  
Slack percussive jazz  
I know, dude! They're both legends!  
It still sounds aimless

### SERGIO MENDES TIMELESS

Career revival  
Using others' talents ... it's  
Santana syndrome!

### MAGNETA LANE DANCING WITH DAGGERS

PAPER BAG  
Nice sophomore disc  
Ladies followed sage advice  
"If it ain't broke, don't ..."

### VARIOUS ARTISTS SEE YU ON THE MOON! SONGS FOR KIDS OF ALL AGES

PAPER BAG  
Are almost always better  
Than ones for adults?

celebration in itself, but the monkey in the room is also Curious George, who is a monkey without restraint. He might as well be a rock star monkey.

Sure, the more you hear of Jack Johnson's music, the easier it is to be critical of his eternally laid-back, beach-bum sameness. Still, he does write and play from his heart, and his music is frivolous, sometimes, but not stupid. His songs tend to be disarming and they don't kill brain cells when you hear them, and that's exactly why this album is a good thing.

*Sing-A-Longs* proves there's absolutely no reason why little kids should be forced to suffer the trauma of listening to music that's been dumbed down beyond necessity. Johnson plays every song here as though he's performing for his regular audience. He also pulls out a few well-chosen covers: The White Stripes' "We're Going to Be Friends" turns out to be ideally suited to the album, and Ben Harper's "With My Own Two Hands" is mutated from a rallying cry into a lesson about life (with the help of Harper himself).

Now if only some of those children's performers would follow Johnson's lead.

### TRAIN FOR ME IT'S YOU

EDEN MUNRO / [eden@vneweekly.com](mailto:eden@vneweekly.com)

I'll admit to being a big fan of Train bassist Johnny Colt from back when he was wrestling the four strings with The Black Crowes.

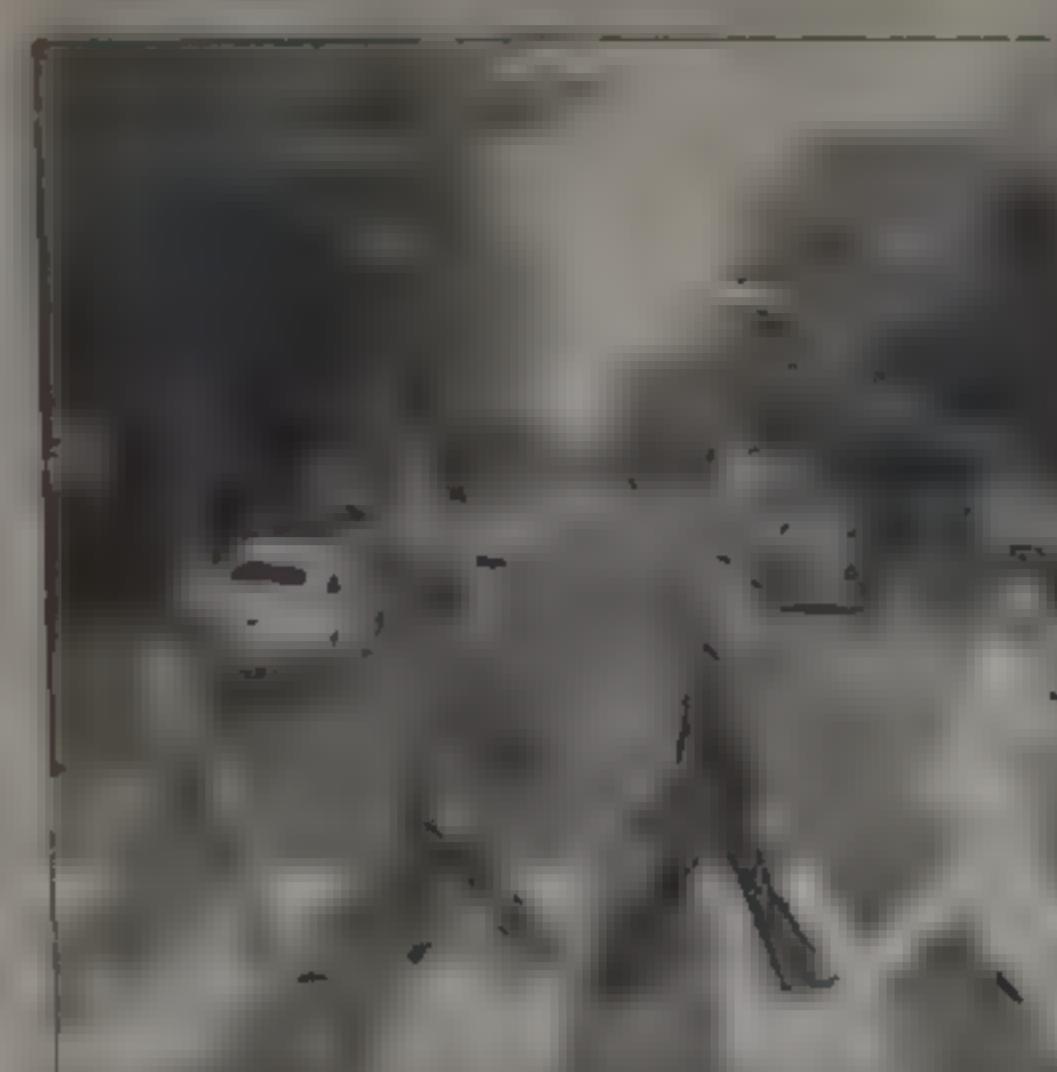
And, having no memory of a single song by Train, I was somewhat optimistic when I sat down with the band's new album, their first featuring Colt.

Well, it took approximately two and a half bars of the first song before the utterly predictable and mediocre easy-listening adult-contemporary lameness that passes for music here put me to sleep.

A second attempt at conquering the album yielded similar results, except that this time I managed to make it through a song titled simply "Cab." It's brilliant, with the singer assuming the role of a cab driver, using his taxi as a metaphor for life and love, singing a lonesome tune with stunning lyrics like "Sometimes I feel like I'm the only cab on the road." Amazing. And the bass playing is ... OK. At least as much as it can be in an undemanding format like this.

As for the rest of the album, it's just watered-down soft-rock. The best way to take this album in is by setting an alarm and closing your eyes until "Cab." Then you can marvel at Train's ability to turn a common taxi into a symbol for romance, before closing your eyes again.

Sorry, Johnny, but you should have hopped a different train. □



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## CLUBS/LECTURES

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL 13212 Jasper Ave, Unit 100, Edmonton, AB T5J 1C9 • Church, 83 Ave, 109 St (446-5461) • Monthly meeting • Tue, Feb. 28 (7pm)

BILL CLINTON-ON CANADA-US RELATIONS Rexall Place (451-8000) • An evening with former President Bill Clinton as he discusses issues facing our world today including the critical issues that affect the Canadian-American relationship • Thu, Mar. 9 (7pm) • \$86.25-\$230 at TicketsMaster.ca

BEST OF HISTORY MONTH SPEAKER SERIES Glenora Community Hall, 13536-109 A Ave (439-2797) • Lecture with Rick Jamerson, President of the Black Pioneer Descendants Society • Tue, Feb. 28 (7:30pm)

BOREAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM 7, 6328A-104 St, every Thu (6:30-8:30) • Organic Roots, 8225-122 St, every third Thu (6:30pm)

CANADIAN LANDMINE AWARENESS WEEK-LECTURES www.minesactioncanada.org, edmonton@dangermines.ca • Words On Weapons Discussion on arms control and the movement to ban landmines, Mon, Feb. 27 • Four Perspectives From The Effort To Ban Landmines; Panel discussion • Wed, Mar. 1

CONVERSATION CAFÉ Unity of Edmonton Church, 13212-106 Ave • Meeting presented by Rev. Yvonne Racine • Every Tue (1-3pm)

FAVA'S MONTHLY WRITER'S CIRCLE Exhibition Suite (429-1671) • Meeting on the first Tue ea. month (7-9pm), to discuss, share and comment on work in progress, common challenges and to hear from special guests

FORUM PRESENTS BOB WISEMAN'S SEMINARS (429-1671) • Discussion on good and bad music for film • Mar. 6 • Tickets available at FAVA

FLAWLESS FELLATIO Manulife Place 10180-101 St, Executive Conference Room, Suite 1000, 10th Fl, www.inneroracle.com (409-1149) • Seminar presented by Bobbi Stobart RN • Thu, Feb. 23 and Tue, Feb. 26 (7pm-9:15pm) • \$25

JANE AUSEN SOCIETY Edmonton Room, Stanley A. Milner Library (437-4130) • Happy Endings: The film clips Beatrice Neary presents conclusions to the romances between heroine and hero in film versions of the Jane Austen novels • Sat, Feb. 25 (2:45pm) • Free

DISCUSSIONS ON THE CENTURY'S BIG STAGE IN THE HISTORY OF CULTURE Star of the North Retreat Centre, 3A 51st Street, 1000 106 Ave (429-1671) • Discussion on the history of culture • Facilitated by David Goa • Feb. 23, Mar. 16 (8pm) • \$89 (series), \$20 (session) • Pre-register

OUR NORTH AMERICA: FROM TURTLE ISLAND TO THE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY PARTNERSHIP Tory Bldg basement, Rm 95, U of A • Tory Bldg, Basement, Room 95 • Lecture on Canada-Mexico Relations: A Contemporary Balance, featuring speakers Fred Judson, Athanassios Hristoulios • Mar. 9 (3:30pm)

PHILOSOPHERS CAFÉ Stanley A. Milner Library basement, Edmonton Room, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (492-0448) • Words, Words, Words: What's Shakespeare Talking About? with Dr Jonathan Hart • Sat, Mar. 4 (2-3:30pm)

PLANET SIMPSON: CHRIS TURNER Royal Alberta Museum, 12845-102 Ave (426-4985/486-0938) • Learn how a TV show documented and defined an entire era • Mar. 1 (6pm door) • \$20 (proceeds to WINGS)

ROMANCE WRITERS OF EDMONTON Grant McEwan, Rm 5-238, www.romancewritersemonton.com • First and third Thu ea. Month (7-9:30pm)

SENIORS UNITED NOW Royal Canadian Legion, 8 Tache Street, St. Albert (449-1816) • Meeting, featuring speaker Laura Pawlechko from Alberta Senior Services • Mon, Feb. 27 (1:30pm)

SHANE NOSTOSA (PUPPET HARPOON) 112 St, 89 Ave, Rm 228, kmiller@ualberta.ca • Sing four part folk hymns from the American South, no religious affiliation • Every Tue (5-7pm)

TOASTMASTERS • Norwood Toastmasters Club 11150-82 St (430-8774) Learn public speaking and communication skills in an encouraging, supportive and friendly environment, every Thu (8:15pm) • N'Orators Toastmasters Club 11910-40 St (476-6963) Learn public speaking/leadership skills, every Wed (7-9pm)

TOURETTE SYNDROME FOUNDATION Academy of King Edward, 6525-101 St (1-9a-8-824-9764) • Support meeting to provide support for parents of children with TS • First Wed ea. month (7:30pm)

VIGIL TO STOP PRIVATIZATION OF MEDICARE Alberta Legislature • Featuring speakers and music, Thu, Feb. 23 (12:15 noon) • Mon, Feb. 27 (7:15pm) • Wed, Mar. 1 (12:15 noon) • Mon, Mar. 6 (7:15pm) • Wed, Mar. 8 (12:15 noon)

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION (440-1146) • Free guided hikes, approx. 11km at Strathcona Wilderness Centre • Meet at MacDonald's at Capilano Mall, 55 St, 101 Ave • Feb. 26

WOMEN'S HEALING CIRCLE Still Point, 110, 10350 124 St, 1422 Sues • With Marianne Peters • Until Mar. 21 (7-9:30pm) • \$10 (evening)

## QUEER LISTINGS

AGAPE Faculty of Education, U of A Campus • Sex, sexual, gender, and sexual orientation issues • Contact Dr Andre Grace (andre.grace@ualberta.ca) for info

BISEXUAL WOMEN'S COFFEE GROUP bwcgroup@yahoo.ca • Second Wed each month (7:30pm)

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) • Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, screens. Members only

BUDDY'S NITE CLUB 11725 Jasper Ave (488-6636) • Open daily 9-3, Fri 8-3 • Mon: Amateur strip contest (12:30); DJ Alvaro, Ashley Love • Tue: Free pool, Malebox, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Gurlz Gone Wild Midnite with DJ Eddy Toonflash, Mia Fellow, Ashley Love, Yohko Oh-no, guests • Thu: Wet Under Contest (12:30) with DJ Squiggles, Yohko Oh-no • Fri: DJ Alvaro dance party, male strippers • Sat: Theme parties, leather/leather dungeon, free pool, pool tournament, DJ Arrowchaser • Sun: Stardust Lounge with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair (11pm), DJ Eddy Toonflash

DOWN UNDER MENS BATH HOUSE 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) • Open 24/7 • www.gayedmonton.com

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION www.edmontonrbca.org • Monthly after business mixer Network and share contacts in the GLBT business community • Second Wed ea. month

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 300, 11456-Jasper Ave (488-5742) or contact7@hiv.edmonton.com • Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illnesses. Counselling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus • Campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff • Third Thu each month (fall/winter terms) Speakers Series Contact Kris (krisw@ualberta.ca)

LIVING POSITIVE 404, 10408-124 St, www.edmlivingpositive.ca (1-877-975-9448/488-5768) • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Every Tue (7-9pm) Support group • Daily drop-in, peer counselling

MADELEINE SANAM FOUNDATION Faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury (91 St) Rm 3-18 (490-7332) • Program for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and harm reduction in French, English and other African languages • Every 3rd and 4th Sat (8am-5pm) • Free (member/\$10 (membership) • Pre-register

MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB www.geocities.com/makingwaves\_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginner encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue and Thu

PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON 10010-109 St (488-3234) • Open 10am-10pm • Open 10am-10pm • GLBT and Supporters Community and Resource Centre Drop-in, use the library, TV room, community access computers. Join a group or take part in special programming • Bears Movie Night: Bears Club; last Sun ea. month (1-6pm, TV room) • Trans Education/Support Group Support and education for transsexual, transgendered, intersexed, two-spirited and questioning individuals, first, third, last Sun ea. month (2-4pm) • Sunday Night Mens Discussion Group: Mens social and discussion group; every Sun (7pm); Rob Wells at robwells780@hotmail.com • Monday Movie Night: Movie nights with themed movies and discussion afterwards • every Mon • Women's Spirituality Group Drumming circle facilitated by Kuatzi; 2nd Tue ea. month (7pm, TV room) • Bisexual Discussion Group: Mixed social and discussion group drop-in, facilitated by Vanessa edmbi-group@yahoo.com, first, third Tue ea. month (7pm) Meeting Room A) • Community Potluck Dinner: Second Mon ea. month (7-8pm) • Meditation Circle: Drop-in, facilitated by Hanne Csanyi, hanne@tymewnd.com; 1st/3rd Wed ea. month, Meeting Room A, \$5 • The HIV Positive Gay Men's Group: Drop-in caring circle facilitated by Mark (HIV Outreach); every Thu (1-4pm, 7-8pm) • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth support and social group, every Sat (7-8pm), yuy@shaw.ca; www.members.shaw.ca/yuy • Wominspace: 1st Sat ea. month (10am-1pm) • Prime Timers: Monthly member meetings

PRISM BAR AND GRILL 10524-101 St, back entrance (990-0038) • Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (428-3150) • Open Sun-Thu 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am • Wed: Amateur strip with Weena Luv, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvaro • Thu: Rotating shows: Sticky's open stage and the Weakest Link game second and last Thu with DJ Jazzy • Fri: Upstairs, Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outlawak Downstairs DJ Jazzy • Sat: Every Sat like new years. Upstairs. Monthly theme parties with DJ Jazzy; Downstairs: New music with DJ Dan and Mike • Long weekend Sundays: Betty Ford Hangover Clinic Show: Every long weekend with DJ Jazzy • Tue-Thu \$1 (member/\$4 (non-member), Fri-Sat \$4 (member/\$6 (non-member); Sun \$2

STEAMWORKS 11745 Jasper Ave (451-5554) • Steam baths open daily (24hrs)

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Wed: With Annie and Tizzy (7-12pm) • Tue, Sat-Sun: Pool tournaments

## SPECIAL EVENTS

BAD ART FOR BAD PEOPLE Avenue Starepark, 9030-118 Ave (477-2143) • Twenty-year retrospective of posters and pin-up art from Edmonton's and Vancouver's punk scene from the 80s-90s by Bob Proctor • Fri, Feb. 24 (7:30pm door 8:30pm bands) • \$25

BEING CARIBOU Pavilion Centrale, Main Bldg, faculté St. Jean, 8406 Marie-Anne Gaboury • Featuring an opening address by Hélène Walsh followed by the film *Being Caribou* and an address (in French) by Denis Gignac • Thu, Feb. 23 (7:15pm doors, 7:30pm start) • Donation

BLIND A HISTORY MONTH AWARDS BANQUET www.sactioncanada.org (425-0319) • Chateau Louis Conference Centre • Sat, Mar. 4 (6:30pm-10:30am) • \$40 (adult) / \$35 (student)

CANADIAN LANDMINE AWARENESS WEEK www.sactioncanada.org, Feb. 27-Mar. 5 • *Minefield in My Neighborhood*: McIntyre Park, 103 St, 83 Ave, a simulated minefield, and more, Sat, Feb. 25 (10am-2pm) • *Demine Film*

Screening Stanley A. Maher Library Theatre, documentary, Thu, Mar. 2 (7pm) • *Spotlight De A Massacre* Black Dog Freehouse, Underdog (downstairs) 10 short films; Fri, Mar. 3 (7pm); free

IRISH FILM FESTIVAL Met. Cineplex Cineplex Theatre, 801 101A Ave (436-3219) • Presented by the Celtic Cultural Association of Alberta • Mar. 3-5 • Tickets available by calling 436-3219, or at the door

LOVE STYLES-SPRING FEVER 10708-124 St (453-2440) • Theatre Network's fashion fundraiser presenting a night of music and style with music by Andrea House and Chris Smith, choreography/environments by Henry and Irving, hair and makeup by Propaganda • Mar. 1 (7pm) • \$20

MARIA DUNN BENEFIT FOR CHOICE Cosmopolitan Mu. Society, 8426 Gateway Blvd (425-1757) • Folk music by Maria Dunn, and a live and silent auction • Sat, Feb. 25 (8pm) • \$25 (adult) at TIX on the Square, proceeds will support sexual health education and youth programs of Planned Parenthood Edmonton

MURDER MYSTERY: SWEET REVENGE Prosper Place Clubhouse, 2nd Fl, 10584-108 St (426-7861) • Murder mystery dinner theatre • Thu, Feb. 23 (5pm dinner, 7pm show) • \$22 (adult) / \$25 (door)

OCEAN OF LIGHT CHORALE Stencil Hall, Taylor University College, 11525-23 Ave (448-1505/481-6977) • Fundraiser gala and concert featuring various choirs, Pillars of Peace, and a presentation by Memunatu Dura Kamara • Sat, Feb. 25 (7pm) • \$10/\$25 (family) proceeds go towards the Alberta Canada Primary School in Sierra Leone

ONE Unity Church of Edmonton, 132 St, 106 Ave (913-6466) • Movie presented by Unity of Edmonton • Fri, Feb. 24 (7pm) Sun, Feb. 26 (1pm), Mar. 5 (1pm) • \$12

PLANET IN FOCUS FILM FESTIVAL Royal Alberta Museum Theatre (453-9100) • International environmental film and video festival • Feb. 25-26 • \$8 and \$5

RUSSIAN WINTER FESTIVAL Woodcroft Community Hall, 13915-115 Ave (240-5886) • Russian traditional food, entertainment, outdoor contests, and a display of Russian folk objects • Sun, Feb. 26 (1-5pm) • Free

SACRED STORY FESTIVAL Hear Theatre, MacEwan College, 10045-155 St (481-8400) • Stories and mythology of diverse cultures and religions featuring a 50-voice choir, Chinese dancing, and an audiovisual presentation • Sat, Feb. 25 (7pm) • \$11 (adult) / \$8 (child/senior)

## KARAOKE

AVENUE PIZZA 8519-112 St (432-0536) • Every Thu (9:30pm)

B-STREET 11818-111 Ave (414-0545) • Every Wed-Sun (9pm) with Brad Scott

BANKER'S PUB 16753-100 St (406-5440) • Every Fri (9pm-1am) • Every Sun (8pm-midnight); with Off-Key Entertainment

BLIND PIG PUB AND GRILL 32 St. Anne Street, St. Albert 418-6332 • Every Thu • Every Wed, name that tune

CAMELOT SPORTS BAR 10231-95 St (425-4298) • Every Sun (8pm-12). Hosted by Jeannie

CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB 37 Millbourne Rd • Every Tue (8pm); with Sonia Prosound

DOYLE'S PUB 2619-151 Ave (473-1961) • Every Fri/Sat (9pm)

ECCO PUB 9605-66 Ave • Every Mon (9pm); with Sonia, Prosound Productions

FRANCO'S 14059 Victoria Trail (478-4636) • Every Thu (8-12) Fri-Sat (10pm-2:30am); with Debra-Fae

FUNKY BUDDHA ON Whyte Ave 10341-82 Ave (433-9676)

• Every Sun: Karaoke Night

GAS PUMP 10166-114 St (488-4841) • Every Tue/Wed (9pm)

HOLIDAY INN 4520-76 Ave • Every Thu (8:30pm); with Prosound Productions

JAMMERS PUB 11948-127 Ave (451-8779) • Every Mon (7-11pm) hosted by Peggy Sue

LAKEVIEW PUB 18, 9104-179 Ave • Every Sat (9pm-1am) with Off-Key Entertainment

MOJO'S Best Western Hotel, Fort Saskatchewan • Every Fri (9:30pm) with Sonia, Prosound Productions

O'CONNORS IRISH PUB 9013-88 Ave (469-8165) • Every Thu (9pm-1am)

PICARD'S PUB 10725-104 Ave (428-4386) • Every Fri (4pm) hosted by Chris

ROSARIO KARAOKE CENTRAL 11715-108 Ave (447-4727)

• Nightly (9:30pm); with Dave and Ed

ROSE AND CROWN 10235-101 St • Every Sun (9pm); with Sonia Prosound Productions

ROSIE'S BAR AND GRILL • Downtown, 10604-101 St (423-3499), every Mon-Sat (9pm); Sun (7pm); with Ruth

Highstreet, 10315-124 St (482-1600); daily (9:30pm) • Old Strathcona, 10475-80 Ave (439-7211); every Thu-Sat (9:30pm-1:30am) • 99 St, 63 Ave; every Thu-Sat (9pm-1am); with Off-Key Entertainment

SANTANA'S • Every Wed (9pm-2am)

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## ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)

After viewing Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in 1662, diarist Samuel Pepys called it "the most stupid, ridiculous play I ever saw in my life." French philosopher Voltaire had an equally dim view of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. "One would imagine this piece to be the work of a drunken savage," he wrote in 1768. Pepys's and Voltaire's opinions of the Bard ultimately became a minority view, of course. In the coming months, I predict there will be a similar evolution in the consensus about certain events of your own past. Both you and others will come to think highly of things once considered worthless or aberrant. Redemption begins now.

## TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)

To celebrate this royal phase of your astrological cycle, I would love to create a "Master of the Universe" crown for you to wear, at least in your imagination. Since I'd like it to conform to your exact needs and specifications, I'm soliciting your input. Please visualize in great detail the kind of regal headpiece you want, then communicate a vision of it to me telepathically. When it's done, I will set it on your head in a dream, and ask you to not take it off for five days and five nights.

## GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 20)

I advise you not to take any of the following actions in the coming week: getting a vanity license plate that says 2GD4U or SUX2BU; pretending you know stuff you

don't; doing anything that will later require you to tell someone, "I can explain everything"; getting cosmetic surgery that makes you resemble your favorite celebrity; cleverly mocking people who haven't had the same luck and privileges you've had. On the other hand, I do recommend that you engage in actions like the following: giving theatre tickets to a homeless vagabond; doing a day-long impersonation of the person you want to become; tapping into your talent for healing mischief as you comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable; buying yourself a gift that will compel you to stretch your capacities; doing a storytelling performance for the people at an old folks' home; climbing a tree and singing songs that inspire you to move more rapidly toward the future.

## CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

It's official. The National Climatic Data Center has confirmed that the weather went crazy in the US last year. From Fresno's 21 consecutive days of near-40C temperatures to record rainfall in Las Vegas, Wichita, and Pensacola, extreme conditions became commonplace. For you, Cancerian, the coming weeks will have a certain metaphorical resemblance to last year's profusion of weather anomalies. For instance, you can expect events that are akin to hailstorms from sunny skies and triple rainbows at dawn. But that won't be a problem as long as you vow to be intrigued and entertained, not thrown off course, by the interesting outbreaks of wild phenomena.

## LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

"Human beings are often unable to receive because we do not know what to ask for," writes Malidoma Some in his book *Of Water and the Spirit*. "We some-

times can't get what we need because we do not know what we want." Your task in the coming week, Leo, is to make sure you don't fit his description. How? Devote yourself to the glorious quest of decoding your most fundamental riddle: What is it you want more than anything else? Once you know, take a pledge to put that desire at the center of your life.

## VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

It will be a rather animalistic week, Virgo—or at least it *should* be. I suggest that you learn to feel more trust in your primal instincts; find out more about the part of you that doesn't use words. If you've got the luxury to experiment, see what it's like when you give your inner beast permission to express all of its creativity. The coming days will also be prime time to befriend lone wolves, horse around with wise old owls, welcome back lost sheep, play possum with jackasses, and flirt with sacred cows.

## LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

Indian director T Rajeev Nath is in the early stages of planning his 11th film. It will be a story about Nobel Peace Prize-winner Mother Teresa. Among the small group of actresses he's considering to play the title role is none other than the American celebrity Paris Hilton. Apparently Rajeev Nath can sense something in Hilton that is invisible to many of the rest of us. I urge you to be like him in the coming days. Be on the lookout to find value in things that no one else esteems. Find the hidden beauty that everybody has missed. Hunt for riches in the least likely places.

## SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

I swear the strange woman standing near me at LA's Getty Museum was having an

erotic experience as she gazed upon van Gogh's *Irises*. She wasn't touching herself, nor was anyone else. But she was apparently experiencing waves of convulsive delight, as suggested by her rapid breathing, shivering muscles, fluttering eyelids, and sweaty forehead. Fifteen minutes later, I saw her again in front of Jean-Honoré Fragonard's *The Fountain of Love*. She was only slightly more composed. In a friendly voice, I said, "This stuff really moves you, doesn't it?" "Oh, yeah," she replied, "I've not only learned how to make love with actual flowers and clouds and fountains, I can even make love with paintings of them." Your assignment in the coming weeks, Scorpio, is to take a page from this woman's *Kama Sutra*. Figure out how to achieve rapturous communion with absolutely *everything*.

## SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

"They say a thing is holy if it makes you hold your tongue," muses a character in John Crowley's fantasy novel *Engine Summer*, speaking of the difference between his culture and another. "But we say a thing is holy if it makes you laugh." Let this be a seed thought as you re-evaluate and take inventory of what constitutes holiness for you, Sagittarius. According to my reading of the astrological omens, you will thrive if you spend quality time in sacred space seeking out uncanny experiences that kindle feelings of adoration and awe and amusement.

## CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

You will soon experience an upsurge in brainpower—perhaps as much as a 10-point increase in your IQ. I believe the events that heighten your intelligence will involve you doing something brave and resourceful. It's possible, for

instance, that you'll dive into a frigid river to save a drowning child or race into a burning building to rescue a beloved animal. Or perhaps your courage will be more subtly expressed: you will offer forgiveness to someone who has wronged or you will speak the difficult but necessary words that everyone has been afraid to articulate.

## AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

I'm not necessarily advising you to vent your frustrations by going out after midnight and filling up random strangers' mailboxes with ice cream. Nor do I suggest that you express any of your itchy, inarticulate emotions by using felt-tip markers to scrawl "The people in this place eat kittens" on the wall of an institution that messed with you. Both of those actions might get you arrested, and the proper way to channel your angst is not to do something that sabotages you but rather that elevates and enlightens you. So please figure out an ingenious, constructive way to get your dark yayas out.

## PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

Of all the arguments made in favor of getting regular exercise, I rarely hear the one that's most important to me: do it because it strengthens and tones the power of your will. When you get used to rousing yourself out of your physical inertia, the habit carries over into the mental and spiritual sphere. You find it easier to force yourself out of your comfort zones and push toward the next frontier. You're less likely to procrastinate and accept mediocrity, and you actually enjoy challenging yourself with worthy goals that require strenuous effort. It's now the will-building season for you, Pisces. You know what to do. v

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IF YOU WANT TO PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED AD IN VUE WEEKLY, PLEASE PHONE 426-1996. DEADLINE IS NOON THE TUESDAY BEFORE PUBLICATION

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## ARTIST TO ARTIST

The Alberta Society of Artists: Call for Membership. Submission deadline is Mar. 1, 2006. (780) 426-0072 [www.artists-society.ab.ca](http://www.artists-society.ab.ca)

**Canadian Badlands Passion Play** (Drumheller, Alberta) Auditions: King's University College, 9125-50 St. Mar. 1 & Mar. 28 (3:30-9:30pm). Ph Daniel van Heyst 485-3500 ext. 8020 (w/485-9360 h) [www.canadianpassionplay.com](http://www.canadianpassionplay.com)

**Good comedy writer seeks opportunities.** Sample material available. Slapstick Inc #212 9258-110A Ave Edmonton T5H1J4.

**Edmonton May Week Workers Art Show—Call for Artists:** Worker's art show. To submit, please ph Tom Gale at 433-0757. **Deadline: Apr. 11.**

**Edmonton Women's Film Society**—call for film submissions for feminist film festival. [www.EWFS.ca](http://www.EWFS.ca) **Deadline: Mar. 31**

**Call for Submissions: Gallery at Milner.** **Deadline: Feb. 28.** Ph 496-7030 for info.

**WALTERDALE: Costuming in Community Theatre** with Geri Dittrich. **Sat, Feb. 25.** free (member) \$25 (non-member) 454-8606 pre-register.

If the **HAT** fits call for submissions, open to Alberta artists. **Deadline: Mar. 15, 2006.** For info Ph 481-9028, [dm.danielle@charlesflydesign.ca](mailto:dm.danielle@charlesflydesign.ca)

**CALL TO ENTER: NEXTFEST 2006** June 1-11 Visual Arts Submission **deadline Mar. 15.** contact [nextfestarts@gmail.com](mailto:nextfestarts@gmail.com) for info.

**Wanted: female with conceptual continuity, art and music to help create a children's book and tape.** Min 653-2873.

**Printmaking workshops at SNAP Gallery and Printshop** in Etching and Silkscreen. Starting soon. Call 423-1482 to register, info.

Call to Enter: **ArtsHub Studio Gallery** features guest artists. Incl. **Proposal**, 10 slides/photos, CV, Artist statement. For info Ph Tim 423-2966

**NEW Winter Art Classes & Workshops at Harcourt House:** Starting in Feb. Ph 426-4180. [www.harcourthouse.ab.ca](http://www.harcourthouse.ab.ca) for info.

Seeking male (16-19yrs, 5'-11") int. in learning Olympic DanceSport (ballroom dance) at a competitive level. reply@musicalca.ca

## MUSICIANS

Fam. singer needed, romantic hits: 20s to now. weekends, team player, some duets. wantfemalesinger@yahoo.ca Ph 421-0864.

**MacEwan graduate singer/songwriter** looking for motivated, enthusiastic **Bass + Drums.** Wide influences: exciting music; mostly rock. Patrick 701-1447

**Professional Keyboardist** from Montreal, equipped, available for gigs. Blues, rock, funk. Call 907-3353 or [davelines@gmail.com](mailto:davelines@gmail.com)

**Jubilations**  
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**Dinner Theatre**  
is seeking  
**actors**  
for the upcoming production of  
**"The Gerry**  
**Steinfeld Show"**  
If you have a great impersonation  
of one of the main characters, can  
sing, and are interested in audi-  
tions, please call  
**Trevor at 484-2424**  
or email:  
[cdm.stagemgr@jubilations.ca](mailto:cdm.stagemgr@jubilations.ca)

## VUEWEEKLY

## CONTEST RULES

Unless otherwise specified,  
the following will apply:

- the winner must be 18 or older
- prize must be accepted as awarded
- no one may enter any contest more than once
- you may win only once every 60 days
- Vue Weekly reserves the right to exclude anyone from our contests
- no staff, sponsors or members of their immediate family may enter
- the personal information of those who enter will not be sold but may be provided to contest sponsors
- the chances of winning depend on the number of entries received
- by entering, entrants consent to the use of their names by Vue Weekly for publicity
- Vue Weekly is not responsible for prizes unclaimed after 15 days

## Of anal sex and use of the English language: a treatise

## ADVICE

## ALT.SEX.COLUMN

ANDREA WEMERSON  
[altsex@altsexcolumn.com](mailto:altsex@altsexcolumn.com)

## Dear Andrea:

Have you ever heard of a Tony Danza, in reference to a form of "Donkey Punch?" Love, Vaguely Wondering

## Dear Vague:

Why or how I became the go-to girl for questions about punching women in the head while having anal sex with them I couldn't tell you, nor am I proud of it, but since we're here I might as well tell you that a Tony Danza is, of course, punching a girl in the head while having anal sex with her and shouting "Who's The Boss?"

Before any feminists of the "that's not funny" persuasion write me outraged letters I should point out that there is absolutely nothing preventing women from shouting "Who's The Boss?" while having violent anal sex with men, nor are same-sex variations in any way unfeasible. Love, Andrea

## Dear Andrea:

What are the benefits for women to want to try anal sex?

Love, Really Wondering

## Dear Really:

I'm tempted to say "They get more dates" but I suppose that reflects a rather jaundiced view of the contemporary dating scene. Or does it? It does seem true that anal sex appears slowly to be repeating the journey that oral sex took from forbidden (albeit in fact practiced) to kinky to "normal," over the second half of the last century.

But men are always going to enjoy a slight edge in the Anal Sex Appreciation Olympics, since not only are they the ones getting the most direct stimulation out of insertive anal sex, but also, due to the convenient placement of the prostate gland, out of receptive anal intercourse.

I also think that if any of this has the slightest connection to any primal longings for breasts or eyes or any body part not commonly encountered in somebody's pants, I'll eat my head, and yours.

Love, Andrea

## Dear Andrea:

Please help end a longtime debate between my best friend and I. Is seamen fattening?

Love, Kinda Wondering

## Dear Kinda:

Seamen, tending to be burly types, would be very fattening indeed if you ate the whole thing. **Semen**, on the other hand, is a mere teaspoon or so of protein with a little sugar and couldn't put a pound on you unless you lived a lifestyle so dangerous and disgusting that weight gain would be the least of your problems.

Love, Andrea

## FOR SALE

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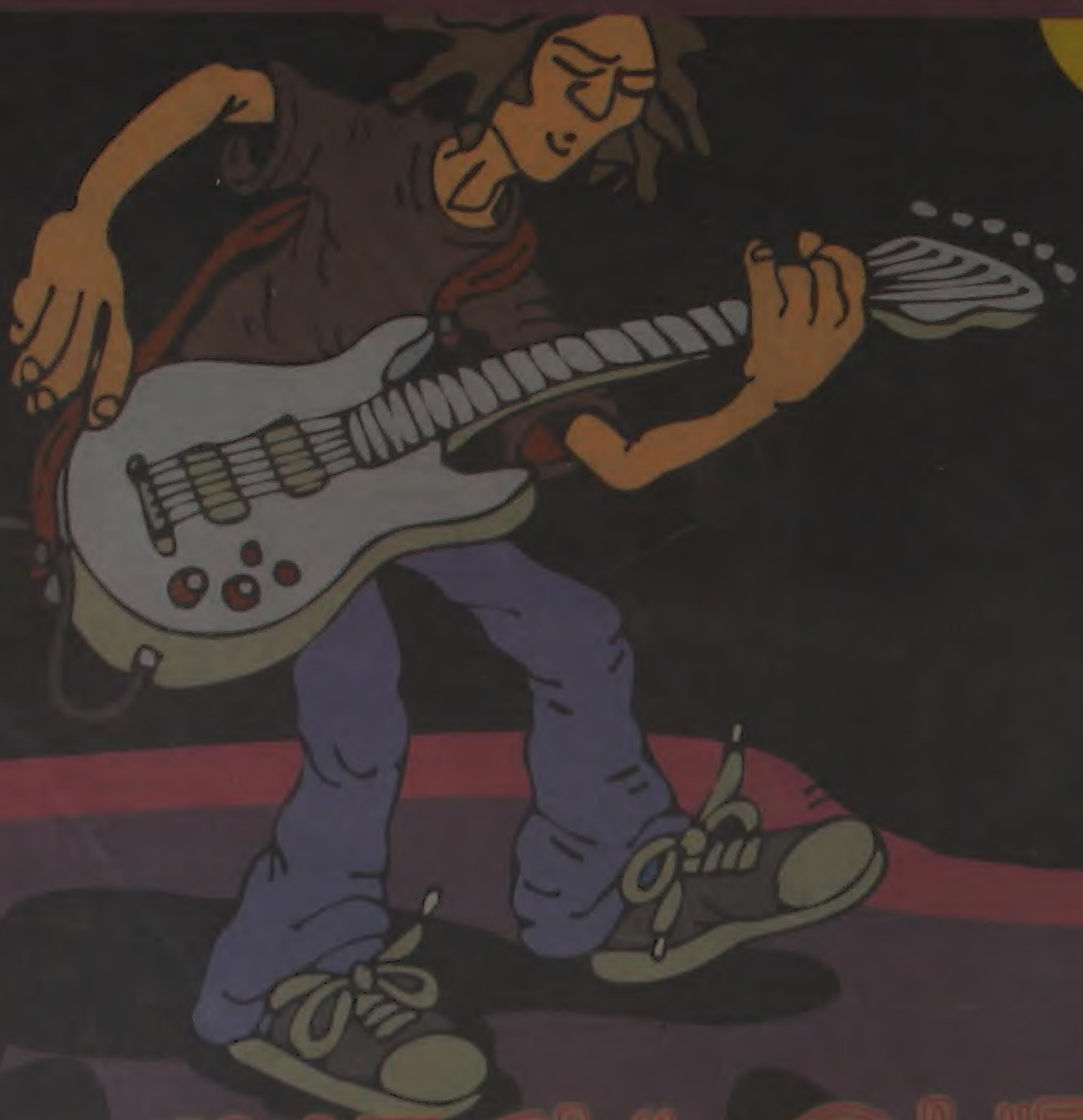
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